

2014–2015 Annual Report

MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION



Annual Report



Missouri Department of Conservation
Fiscal Year July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015

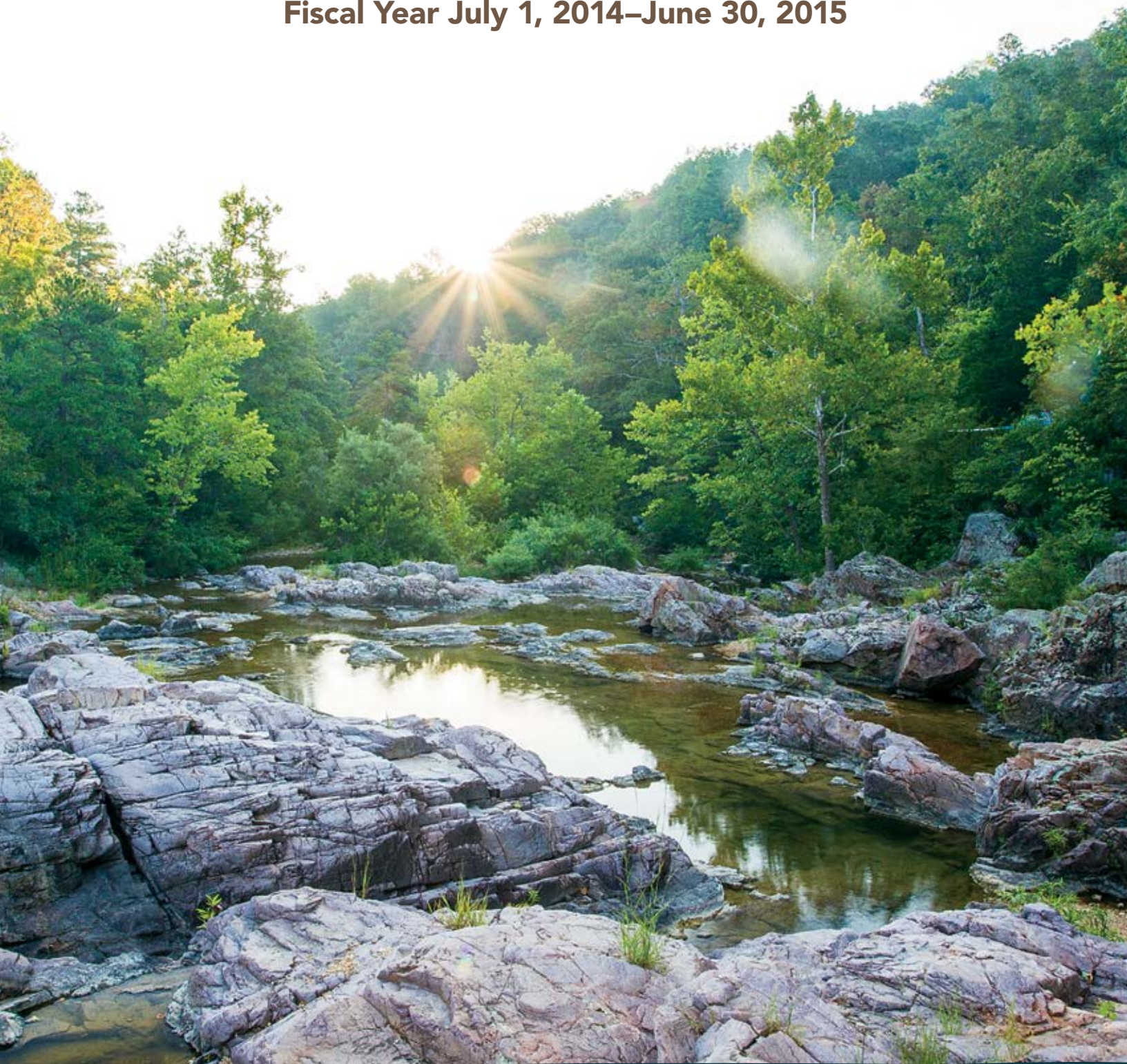
Contents

Annual Report Summary	3
Missouri State Constitutional Language	11
Our Responsibilities	12
The Conservation Commission, Director, and Mission Statement	14
Conservation at a Glance	15
We Listen to Missourians	16
What Missourians Say About Conservation	17
The Economics of Conservation in Missouri	18
Hunting and Fishing	19
Forestry and Wood Products	20
Wildlife Recreation	21
Our Pledge to Serve Missourians	22
Bringing the Goals to Life	23
Healthy Fish, Forest, and Wildlife	23
Manage Lands in Public Trust	32
Sound Financial Accountability	35
Citizen Involvement/Education	36
Engage Partners at all Levels	44
Department Organization and Administrative Descriptions	52
Department Regions and Units	53
Department Organizational Chart	54
Director's Office and Department Divisions	55
Conservation by the Numbers	87
Actual Funds Available and Disbursements	88
Number of Deer Harvested by County	89
Number of Turkeys Harvested by County	90
Acres of Conservation Land by County	91
Payment In-lieu of Taxes (PILT) by County	92
County Aid Road Trust (CART) Program	93
Capital Improvement Projects Funding by County	94
Number of Deer and Turkey Permit Holders by County of Residence	95
Number of Fishing Permit Holders by County of Residence	96
Number of Small Game Permit Holders by County of Residence	97
Number of Landowner Deer Permit Holders by County of Residence	98
Number of Landowner Turkey Permit Holders by County of Residence	99
Number of Hunting Permit Holders by County of Residence	100



Annual Review

Fiscal Year July 1, 2014–June 30, 2015



Mill Mountain Natural Area, Shannon County

PHOTOGRAPH BY NOPPADOL PAOTHONG

A

ANNUAL REVIEWS ARE ALL about the numbers. They show in figures, dollars and cents, percentages, and decimals all the work an organization has done in the past year. While this annual review summary does highlight the Department's key statistics from July 1, 2014, through June 30, 2015, we've also tried to tell the conservation success stories not always reflected through numbers.

These success stories are made possible by Missourians who care deeply about conservation and dedicate dollars to ensure a conservation legacy for future generations. The Department works diligently to carry out our mission of protecting fish, forests, and wildlife in the state and to help people discover nature. Thank you for partnering with us year after year on that mission. These are your success stories, too.



Sedge wren on gray-headed coneflowers at Pawnee Prairie Conservation Area, part of the Grand River Grasslands Priority Geography Area

Missouri State Budget

A. Conservation.....0.6%

The Conservation Department represents less than 1 percent of the total state budget and receives no state general revenue

B. Natural and Economic Resources.....3.7%

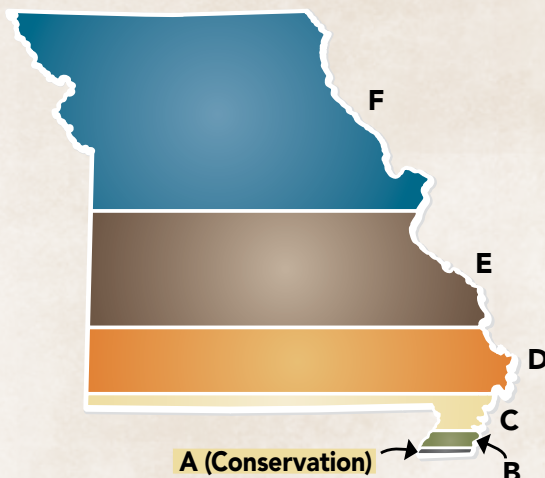
C. Transportation.....8.3%

D. Government Services.....15.4%

E. Education.....27.1%

F. Health and Social Services.....44.9%

Total State Budget.....\$26,028,776,360



Receipts

A. Conservation Sales Tax.....\$110,528,741

B. Permit Sales.....\$33,095,119

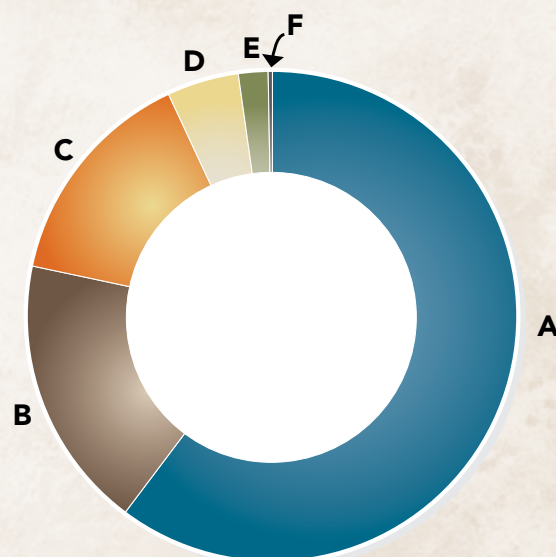
C. Federal Reimbursements.....\$26,910,971

D. Sales and Rentals.....\$8,729,217

E. Other Sources.....\$3,458,705

F. Interest.....\$368,595

Total Receipts.....\$183,091,348



Disbursements

A. County Assistance Payments.....0.88%

B. Capital Improvements.....9.81%

C. Information Technology.....7.78%

D. Fisheries.....7.98%

E. Forestry.....10.40%

F. Wildlife.....12.54%

G. Outreach and Education.....9.50%

H. Private Land Services.....4.85%

I. Protection.....9.09%

J. Resource Science.....7.61%

K. Regional Public Contact Offices.....1.17%

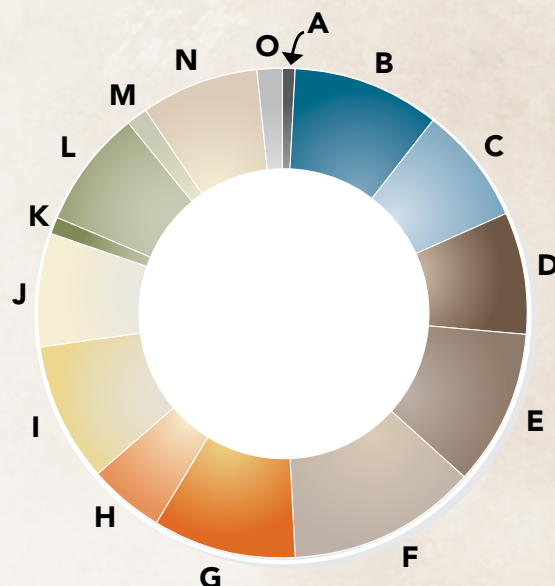
L. Administrative Services.....7.69%

M. Human Resources.....1.37%

N. Design and Development.....7.76%

O. Administration.....1.57%

Total Disbursements.....100%



Healthy Fish, Forests, and Wildlife



The Topeka Shiner Shines

In October 2014, Department fisheries biologists carefully poured a bucket of approximately 9,800 Topeka shiners into a clear stream on the Union Ridge Conservation Area in northeast Missouri. Hope filled their eyes and they cheered as the endangered minnow quickly darted off to its new home. As part of the restoration stocking effort to aid this federally endangered minnow in its native habitat, the Department also released 50 orange spotted sunfish along with the Topeka shiners, because shiners only lay eggs in active sunfish nests.



The Call of the Wild: Elk in the Ozarks

The unique sound of elk bugling through the crisp air is another sign of fall at Peck Ranch and Current River conservation areas. The Department began a five-year elk research project to help biologists better understand how elk survival and reproduction differ each year. As the elk herd expands, the Department continues to work with landowners to improve habitat acres around the conservation areas. This habitat work offers big rewards for landowners, as well as unique opportunities, as one landowner experienced firsthand, waking up and seeing nearly 75 elk out his window.



Bull elk

It Takes a Team to Fight Wildfires

The Conservation Department worked with fire departments across Missouri to suppress 2,923 wildfires that consumed 22,044 acres. Two Department programs improve fire-protection efforts at the local level. The Excess Property program provides equipment and MDC staff provide training, which helps rural fire departments respond more effectively and efficiently to fires throughout the state. The Department, in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service, provided \$393,547 in matching Volunteer Fire Assistance grants to 189 rural volunteer fire departments this fiscal year. The money is used to purchase personal protective gear and firefighting equipment, which is used in fighting wildfires as well as structure fires. Over the past 30 years, the Department has provided more than \$7.5 million to rural fire departments.

Science-Based Conservation

The Department uses a science-based approach to managing fish, forests, and wildlife in the state, and research projects are one of the ways the Department obtains critical information. For example, the Department is conducting a five-year wild turkey research project to monitor populations in several counties across the state. This research includes banding and putting radio transmitters on wild turkeys to determine gobbler and hen survival. The research will also help determine what proportion of the banded wild turkeys is harvested by hunters. The results will inform wild turkey management decisions and sustain opportunities for all Missourians to view this majestic bird in the wild.



Wild turkey

DEER STUDY

Department biologists are learning more about white-tailed deer survival, reproduction, and movement as a five-year research study progresses. In partnership with the University of Missouri–Columbia, the new study uses computer, telemetry, and satellite technology to track deer to provide herd trends statewide for both agriculture and forest areas. Researchers are currently tracking 90 collared deer using GPS technology to gather satellite readings on deer movement, and biologists are able to download that data to computers. They can map each collared deer's travels in fields and forests, or if movement stops, note mortality.

"I like to think our wetland restoration efforts are more along the lines of 'rehabilitation.' We aren't attempting to put back everything that was here historically, we are trying to recover the parts of the system so that it can function properly as we move forward."

—Frank Nelson,
Conservation Department
resource scientist



Duck Creek Conservation Area

Manage Lands in Public Trust

Wetland Conservation Area Renovations

In October 2014, the Department and Ducks Unlimited invited the public to a dedication of Duck Creek Conservation Area, located in southeast Missouri, to celebrate renovations completed to date on the wetland area. The event, however, marked a bigger celebration — the ambitious partnership established 10 years earlier to rehabilitate and enhance five of the Department's oldest wetland conservation areas (Schell Osage, B.K. Leach, Montrose, Duck Creek, and Fountain Grove). Many of these wetland areas are celebrating their 50th birthdays, so these renovations are critical to the long-term success of the areas and for fostering the next generation of waterfowl hunters.

Managing Public Land for Missourians

The Department manages 955 properties, totaling nearly 1 million acres statewide, for the purpose of restoring and conserving fish, forest, and wildlife resources and providing outdoor opportunities for Missourians. This year, Department staff conducted habitat management activities on nearly 185,000 acres of public land, including wetlands, woodlands, forests, savannas, croplands (through permittee farmers and food plots), grassland, prairies, old fields, and glades. Public review of conservation area plans also offers an opportunity for Missourians to comment about management on a specific area. In fiscal year 2015, staff posted 69 area plans, covering 115 areas, online for public comment.



Pale purple coneflowers at
Golden Prairie Natural Area

FERAL HOGS

The Department continues to work with partners and landowners to eradicate feral hogs from the landscape. We have learned from other states and through trends in Missouri that hunting does not help to eradicate hogs. The Department and other partners have increased feral hog eradication efforts this year through trapping, and they are asking citizens to report feral hog sightings or damage.



Sound Financial Accountability

New Electronic Nursery System

The state nursery annually grows and distributes close to 3 million seedlings of more than 60 species of trees. These seedlings, planted on both public and private lands statewide, include trees and shrubs suitable for reforestation and wildlife habitat restoration. With the nursery filling more than 10,000 orders annually, an electronic ordering system was implemented this year to integrate the inventory tracking and seedling delivery. This new technology also allows customers to pay for seedlings online.



Citizen Involvement/Education

Helping Kids and Families Discover Nature

Helping kids and families discover nature is a key part of the Department's mission. Last year, the Department held six Discover Nature Girls Camps for girls ages 11–15 to get young women excited about the outdoors. Camp classes include hunter education, archery, canoeing, fishing, tree-stand safety, and Dutch oven cooking. The Department's Discover Nature Schools conservation education curriculum, which is used in 99 percent of Missouri school districts for grades pre-K through 12, help teachers engage students with hands-on, outdoor learning. In addition, the Discover Nature — Fishing program helps kids and families have fun in the outdoors by learning to fish. Last year, more than 5,000 people learned to fish for the first time through this program.

Archery in the Schools Program Builds Champions

Missouri National Archery in the Schools Program (MoNASP) not only promotes education, self-esteem, and physical activity for kids in grades 4–12, but it also builds national champions. In May, Sarcoxie R-II fifth-grader Max Wrangler took first place at the National Archery in the Schools Program/International Bowhunting Organization 3-D Challenge national tournament in Kentucky. He received the top score for all Elementary Division shooters. The Department provides MoNASP grants to schools for equipment, as well as free teacher and staff training for those administering the program. More than 135,000 Missouri students from 500 schools participate in MoNASP.



More than **1 million** people visit Department of Conservation nature centers, education centers, and visitor centers each year.

Community Conservation in Urban Areas

Conservation in urban areas educates many Missourians and exposes them to natural habitats that may not otherwise be available. The Community Conservation Grant Program awarded \$100,000 to five urban habitat restoration and monitoring projects in the St. Louis metropolitan area, including urban native bee monitoring, prairie reconstruction, and woodland restoration. The Tree Resource Improvement and Maintenance (TRIM) cost-share program continues to receive interest from communities of all sizes across the state. The program provides reimbursements of \$1,000–\$10,000 to assist government agencies, public schools, and non-profit groups with trees on public lands. In FY15, the Department funded 48 projects with nearly \$500,000 spent on these community projects.



ROD AND REEL LOANER PROGRAM

The Department makes fishing more accessible through the Rod and Reel Loaner Program. The program, which is available in 72 locations across the state, allows individuals to check out fishing poles and tackle boxes for free. The fishing poles are equipped with standard spin-cast reels. The tackle boxes are supplied with hooks, sinkers, and bobbers for basic fishing opportunities. For a loaner location near you, visit on.mo.gov/1f4bgX0.

Helping Missouri Landowners with Key Habitat Conservation

The Department received \$1.3 million in federal grant money from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to help private landowners in Missouri improve grasslands, glades, and woodlands for both wildlife habitat and agriculture production. The Department will match the federal grant money over the next five years through its existing Private Land Services Program, which provides expert advice and assistance to more than 29,000 private landowners in Missouri each year.



Engage Partners at All Levels

Feeding the Hungry through Share the Harvest

While hunters often share their deer photos each season with family and friends, they rarely take credit for the gift that comes next — helping to feed hungry Missourians through their deer meat donation. Through the Share the Harvest program, made possible by the efforts of the Department, Conservation Federation of Missouri, local charitable organizations, and local meat processors, more than 3 million pounds of deer meat has been donated to local food pantries since the program started in 1992. In 2014, almost 4,000 hunters donated 213,443 pounds of venison to the less fortunate in Missouri. Hunters can donate all or part of their deer to Share the Harvest.



Community Fisheries Assistance

Through the Community Assistance Program and other partnership programs, the Department enters into agreements with cities, counties, state and federal agencies, businesses, foundations, schools, and colleges to cooperatively develop and maintain facilities for anglers and boaters at lake and stream areas. Currently, there are 117 partners in the cooperative management of 166 public lakes, 43 stream access areas, four lake access areas, 10 aquatic education ponds, and 15 lake access facilities. New agreements were made with the cities of Unionville, Bethany, Canton, Fayette, Holden, Lawson, and Macon this fiscal year.

Top Conservation Stories of Fiscal Year 2014–2015

MO Hunting App

The Department developed the MO Hunting mobile application, which enables Missouri hunters, anglers, and trappers to purchase and view annual permits. Deer and turkey hunters also can Telecheck their harvests using the app, which provides an electronic permit stored on your mobile device. New regulations consider this to be a valid permit. The MO Hunting app had more than 27,000 downloads in FY14–15.

Listening to Missourians

Delivering excellent public service means listening to and understanding what Missourians say about conservation programs and services. In fiscal year 2015, there were 129 public engagement opportunities, including deer management and chronic wasting disease meetings, annual hunter surveys, conservation area plan comment periods, regulations committee comments, and unstaffed shooting range surveys.

"Conservation pays. Missouri today offers world-class outdoor adventures, and there is little doubt conservation enhances our quality of life."

**—Robert L. Ziehmer,
director**

Shooting Range Renovations

The Department began construction of a new, state-of-the-art staffed shooting facility at Busch Shooting Range in St. Charles. The new range will incorporate the most current national shooting range design standards, including numerous improvements for user convenience, safety, and reduced waiting times. Originally built in 1975, the Busch range sees more than 40,000 shooters annually. The Department also completed major renovations at the unstaffed Rocky Fork Lakes Shooting Range in Boone County, including new pistol and rifle ranges, re-facing of backstops, and ADA-accessible parking.

State Record Fish

Several Missouri anglers made the record books this year for their big catches in Missouri lakes and streams, including new state records for gizzard shad, blue catfish, paddlefish, striped bass, bigmouth buffalo, and river carpsucker.

Chronic Wasting Disease

There were 11 new cases of chronic wasting disease found in deer harvested in Macon, Adair, and Cole counties, with Cole County being the first case of the disease found outside the Department's six-county CWD management zone (Adair, Chariton, Linn, Macon, Randolph, and Sullivan counties in northern Missouri).

Lake Sturgeon Success

Three decades of lake sturgeon restoration efforts by the Department came to fruition when staff confirmed the fish, nearly extinct within the state, are once again naturally reproducing in the Mississippi River near St. Louis. "We've been stocking lake sturgeon for 30 years, and our highest priority was to establish a self-sustaining population," said MDC River Systems Ecologist Quinton Phelps. "This confirmation is at least the beginning of a self-sustaining population."



NOPPADOL PAOTHONG

Missouri State Constitutional Language

Section 40(a). Conservation commission, members, qualifications, terms, how appointed-duties of commission-expenses of members. — The control, management, restoration, conservation and regulation of the bird, fish, game, forestry and all wildlife resources of the state, including hatcheries, sanctuaries, refuges, reservations and all other property owned, acquired or used for such purposes and the acquisition and establishment thereof, and the administration of all laws pertaining thereto, shall be vested in a conservation commission consisting of four members appointed by the governor, by and with the advice of and consent of the senate, not more than two of whom shall be of the same political party. The members shall have knowledge of and interest in wildlife conservation. The members shall hold office for terms of six years beginning on the first day of July of consecutive odd years. Two of the terms shall be concurrent; one shall begin two years before and one two years after the concurrent terms. If the governor fails to fill a vacancy within thirty days, the remaining members shall fill the vacancy for the unexpired term. The members shall receive no salary or other compensation for their services as members, but shall receive their necessary traveling and other expenses incurred while actually engaged in the discharge of their official duties. *Source: Const. of 1875, Art. XIV, Sec. 16 (as adopted November 3, 1936). (Amended August 8, 1972)*

Section 40(b). Incumbent members. — The members of the present conservation commission shall serve out the terms for which they were appointed, with all their powers and duties.

Section 41. Acquisition of property- eminent domain. — The commission may acquire by purchase, gift, eminent domain, or otherwise, all property necessary, useful or convenient for its purposes, and shall exercise the right of eminent domain as provided by law for the highway commission. *Source: Const. of 1875, Art. XIV, Sec. 16.*

Section 42. Director of conservation and personnel of commission. — The commission shall appoint a director of conservation who, with its approval, shall appoint the assistants and other employees deemed necessary by the commission. The commission shall fix the qualifications and salaries of the director and all appointees and employees, and none of its members shall be an appointee or employee. *Source: Const. of 1875, Art. XIV, Sec. 16.*

Section 43(a). Sales tax, use for conservation purposes. — For the purpose of providing additional moneys to be expended and used by the conservation commission, department of conservation, for the control, management, restoration, conservation and regulation of the bird, fish, game, forestry and wildlife resources of the state, including the purchase or other acquisition of property for said purposes, and for the administration of the laws pertaining thereto, an additional sales tax of one-eighth of one percent is hereby levied and imposed upon all sellers for the privilege of selling tangible personal property or rendering taxable services at retail in this state upon the sales and services which now are or hereafter are listed and set forth in, and, except as to the amount of tax, subject to the provisions of and to be collected as provided in the “Sales Tax Law” and subject to the rules and regulations promulgated in connection therewith; and an additional use tax of one-eighth of one percent is levied and imposed for the privilege of storing, using or consuming within this state any article of tangible personal property as set forth and provided in the “Compensating Use Tax Law” and, except as to the amount of the tax, subject to the provisions of and to be collected as provided in the “Compensating Use Tax Law” and subject to the rules and regulations promulgated in connection therewith. *(Adopted November 2, 1976)*

Section 43(b). Use of revenue and funds of conservation commission. — The moneys arising from the additional sales and use taxes provided for in section 43(a) hereof and all fees, moneys or funds arising from the operation and transactions of the conservation commission, department of conservation, and from the application and the administration of the laws and regulations pertaining to the bird, fish, game, forestry and wildlife resources of the state and from the sale of property used for said purposes, shall be expended and used by the conservation commission, department of conservation, for the control, management, restoration, conservation and regulation of bird, fish, game, forestry and wildlife resources of the state, including the purchase or other acquisition of property for said purposes, and for the administration of the laws pertaining thereto, and for no other purpose. The moneys and funds of the conservation commission arising from the additional sales and use taxes provided for in § 43(a) hereof shall also be used by the conservation commission, department of conservation, to make payments to counties for the unimproved value of land for distribution to the appropriate political subdivisions as payment in lieu of real property taxes for privately owned land acquired by the commission after July 1, 1977, and for land classified as forest cropland in the forest cropland program administered by the department of conservation in such amounts as may be determined by the conservation commission, but in no event shall amount determined be less than the property tax being paid at the time of purchase of acquired lands. *Source: Const. of 1875, Art. XIV, Sec. 16. (Amended November 2, 1976) (Amended November 4, 1980)*

Section 43(c). Effective date-self-enforceability. — The effective date of this amendment shall be July 1, 1977. All laws inconsistent with this amendment shall no longer remain in full force and effect after July 1, 1977. All of the provisions of sections 43(a)–(c) shall be self-enforcing except that the general assembly shall adjust brackets for the collection of the sales and use taxes. *(Adopted November 2, 1976)*

Section 44. Self-enforceability-enabling clause-repealing clause. — Sections 40–43, inclusive, of this article shall be self-enforcing, and laws not inconsistent therewith may be enacted in aid thereof. All existing laws inconsistent with this article shall no longer remain in force or effect. *Source: Const. of 1875, Art. XIV, Sec. 16*

Section 45. Rules and regulations-filing-review. — The rules and regulations of the commission not relating to its organization and internal management shall become effective not less than ten days after being filed with the secretary of state as provided in section 16 of this article, and such final rules and regulations affecting private rights as are judicial or quasi-judicial in nature shall be subject to the judicial review provided in section 22 of article V.

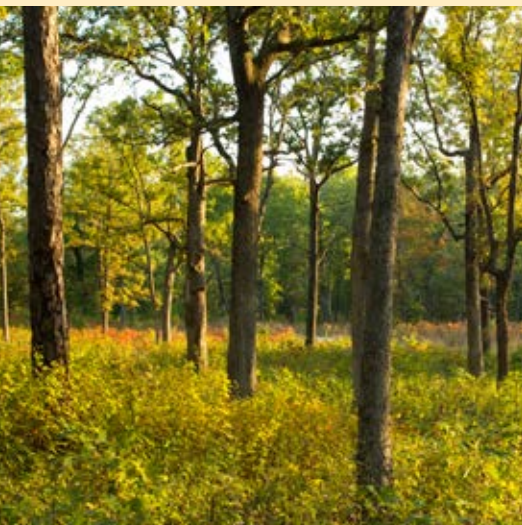
Section 46. Distribution of rules and regulations. — The commission shall supply to all persons on request, printed copies of its rules and regulations not relating to organization or internal management.



Our Responsibilities

1 Manage Missouri's Fish, Forest, and Wildlife

- We work for and with Missourians to sustain healthy fish, forest, and wildlife.
- Conservation successes are many and include forests, streams, white-tailed deer, turkey, fish, and other plants and animals.
- We enforce the *Wildlife Code of Missouri* to provide current outdoor opportunities and to ensure future generations will have those same opportunities to hunt, fish, and enjoy the outdoors.
- Research and citizen input informs decisions on the future of Missouri's fish, forest, and wildlife resources.



Our Fish, Forest, and Wildlife

- Conservation is a partnership. Missouri has more than 44 million acres, over 90 percent are privately owned.
- There are nearly 1,000 conservation areas that provide close-to-home outdoor opportunities on nearly one million acres.
- Healthy fish, forest, and wildlife enrich our economy and the quality of life for all Missouri citizens.



2 Educate Missourians

- We help educate Missourians as they discover nature and improve their outdoor skills.
- Missouri has a rich conservation heritage of a quality outdoors that is being passed along to the next generation through free school materials.
- Hunter education, archery, fishing, shooting skills, and nature-viewing classes empower citizens to enjoy the outdoors.
- Citizens learn about the outdoors through an award-winning *Missouri Conservationist* magazine and children's *Xplor* magazine, along with Web, video, and print information.

3 Help People Be Outdoors

- We provide close-to-home outdoor opportunities in urban, suburban, and rural areas throughout the state at conservation areas, boat ramps, public lakes, nature centers, interpretive centers, shooting ranges, and fish hatcheries.
- We partner with tens of thousands of landowners to help restore, improve, and sustain Missouri forests, waters, and wildlife habitats.



Conservation Pays Its Way

- Conservation generates \$12 billion dollars each year in economic impact and continues to be a wise investment.
- One of every four tourism dollars in Missouri is spent on fish and wildlife recreation.
- 89,000 Missouri jobs are supported by fish and wildlife recreation and the forest products industry.

The Conservation Commission and Director

In 1936, the people of Missouri, through the initiative petition process, voted to amend the Missouri Constitution to establish the Conservation Commission. The four Commissioners, no more than two of whom may belong to the same political party, are appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the senate. They serve with no compensation for six-year terms. The commission is responsible for management of the state's fish, forest, and wildlife resources. The commission is also responsible for hiring the director.



Mr. Don C. Bedell
Sikeston
Term: 7/1/2015 to
7/1/2021



Mr. James T. Blair, IV
St. Louis
Term: 7/13/2011 to
7/1/2017



Mrs. Marilynn J. Bradford
Jefferson City
Term: 10/25/2013 to
7/1/2019



Mr. David W. Murphy
Columbia
Term: 6/4/2014 to
7/1/2019

Director



Mr. Robert L. Ziehmer

Our Mission

To protect and manage the fish, forest, and wildlife resources of the state; to facilitate and provide opportunity for all citizens to use, enjoy, and learn about these resources.

Conservation at a Glance

- ▲ We Listen to Missourians
- ▲ What Missourians Say About Conservation
- ▲ The Economics of Conservation in Missouri
- ▲ Wildlife Recreation
- ▲ Hunting and Fishing
- ▲ Forestry and Wood Products

We Listen to Missourians

The Missouri Department of Conservation believes that all Missouri citizens are important and we want to listen and act to earn their trust. Our job is to listen, understand, and personally deliver programs and services in a manner that benefits all Missourians and the fish, forest, and wildlife resources in Missouri.



- The Conservation Commission meets regularly and anyone may contact the Conservation Commission with comments or request to appear at a Commission meeting.
- The Conservation Department director may be personally contacted at Department headquarters in Jefferson City by telephone.
- Department staff answer questions and address concerns via AskMDC, a service you can access through regular mail, telephone, online, and email (AskMDC@mdc.mo.gov).
- The Department conducts a wide variety of statistically accountable mail surveys, telephone surveys, and focus groups to determine the opinions and attitudes of Missourians about conservation and the Department of Conservation. The Department has conducted attitude, opinion, satisfaction, and participation surveys for more than 30 years.
- The Department has eight regional service centers with staff available to assist Missourians with their conservation requests and needs.
- The Department's monthly magazine, free to Missourians who request it, includes a letter-to-the-editor section and an "AskMDC" column.
- The Department maintains an extensive website (mdc.mo.gov) with conservation information, contact information, and online comment forms.
- The Department conducts frequent public forums to obtain interactive feedback from all Missourians at locations throughout the state.
- Department regulations are formed and discussed in a public setting that invites citizen participation.
- The Department seeks public input on proposed regulations through a variety of venues including the Department's regulation comment page at mdc.mo.gov/node/24137.
- The Department seeks public input on conservation area management plans at mdc.mo.gov/areaplans.

What Missourians say about Conservation

The majority of Missourians feel the Department of Conservation is doing an excellent or good job of providing services to themselves (67 percent), their families (65 percent), the community (64 percent), and the state (68 percent). Most Missourians say they are either very familiar (21 percent) or somewhat familiar (62 percent) with the Missouri Department of Conservation.



- Most Missourians (95 percent) report they are interested in Missouri's fish, forests, and wildlife.
- Most Missourians (71 percent) agree that land should be acquired for fish, forest, and wildlife conservation.
- Most Missourians (89 percent) agree that "It is important for outdoor places to be protected even if you don't plan to visit the area."
- Most Missourians (76 percent) agree that the Department of Conservation should make an effort to restore animals that once lived or are currently very rare in the state.
- Most Missourians (77 percent) agree that the Department of Conservation should help private landowners who want to restore native communities of plants and animals.
- More than three-quarters (77 percent) agree that the Department "should assist communities that want to include trees and green spaces in housing, business, and shopping developments."
- Most Missourians (84 percent) approve of hunting for food, yet only 28 percent approve of hunting for an exceptional animal.
- Most Missourians (88 percent) approve of cutting down trees to improve forest health and condition, yet only 43 percent approve of cutting down trees to make lumber, furniture, or other wood products.
- The majority of Missourians (52 percent) agree that trapping is okay as long as it is regulated.
- Time is mentioned as the biggest obstacle to the enjoyment of outdoor activities by Missourians.
- A majority of Missourians (65 percent) agree that the Department of Conservation is doing a good job of enforcing fish and wildlife laws.
- Most Missourians (76 percent) agree that the Missouri Department of Conservation "is a name I can trust."

Information from the Missouri Department of Conservation, 2013.

The Economics of Conservation in Missouri

The amount of state sales tax revenue generated from fish, forest, and wildlife recreation spending is about the same amount of sales tax revenue received by the Department of Conservation from the one-eighth of one percent Conservation Sales Tax — **CONSERVATION PAYS ITS WAY IN MISSOURI.**



- In Missouri, the total economic impact of fish and wildlife recreation and the forest products industry is more than \$12 billion dollars annually.
- Since 1980, the Department has paid over \$20 million to Missouri counties in lieu of taxes. In fiscal year 2015, more than \$1.6 million was paid to Missouri counties for forest cropland payments, levee and drainage district payments, in-lieu-of-property-tax payments, and county aid road trust payments.
- The forestry and wood products industry in Missouri has more than \$8 billion of impact and supports 42,538 jobs.
- Missourians and non-residents spend more than \$2.6 billion annually related to fish and wildlife recreation. These expenditures generate \$4.7 billion annually in economic impacts in Missouri.
- The annual expenditures related to fish and wildlife recreation support 56,910 jobs in Missouri.
- Fish, forest, and wildlife expenditures generate more than \$507 million annually in state and local tax revenue.
- In Missouri, 2.5 million residents and nonresidents age 16 years and older participate in fishing, hunting, or wildlife-related recreation each year.
- Collectively, resident anglers spend 13.3 million days afield, resident hunters 9.2 million, and resident wildlife-watchers 7.8 million days in away-from-home activities in Missouri. Nonresident anglers add 1.6 million days and nonresident hunters 932,000 days.
- Nonresident expenditures for fishing and hunting in Missouri exceed \$346 million each year. Each nonresident angler and hunter spends an average of \$547 each year in Missouri.
- Deer hunters in Missouri, age 16 years and older, spend \$615 million each year.
- Deer hunting in Missouri generates more than \$1 billion of business activity annually. This results in \$95 million in state and local tax revenue each year.
- Deer hunting expenditures annually support more than 13,000 jobs in Missouri.

Information from the Missouri Department of Conservation and the 2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation.

Missouri Hunting and Fishing

Hunters	576,000
Anglers	1 million
Total Expenditures	\$1.7 billion
Total Jobs Supported	38,185
Earnings from Expenditures	\$1.2 billion
State and Local Tax Revenue	\$274 million
Total Business-Generated Revenue	\$3 billion



STATE TAX REVENUE INFORMATION

Hunters and anglers in Missouri generate \$274 million annually in state and local taxes.

JOBS

Hunters and anglers support 45,939 jobs each year.

TAKE A CLOSER LOOK

- More Missourians hunt or fish than the number who attend St. Louis Rams or Kansas City Chiefs games.
- One of every four Missouri residents hunts or fish.
- Annual spending by hunters and anglers is more than the value of sales for cattle production in Missouri.

- The amount of sales tax revenue generated by fish, forest, and wildlife recreation is more than the amount of sales tax received by the Department of Conservation from the one-eighth of one percent sales tax — in other words, conservation pays its way in Missouri.

Information from the Missouri Department of Conservation and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation.

Missouri Forestry and Wood Products

Total Forested Acres	14 million
Privately Owned Acres	83 percent
Publicly Owned Acres	15 percent
Wood-Using Industry Dollars	\$8 billion
Total Jobs Supported	42,538
Wood-Using Industry Labor Income	\$1.9 billion



STATE TAX REVENUE INFORMATION

Forestry and the wood-using industries in Missouri generate \$78 million each year in state sales tax.

TAKE A CLOSER LOOK

- Each year, about three million tree seedlings are produced in the state nursery.
- More than one million acres of forests have been added to Missouri's landscape in the last 30 years.
- Forests in Missouri are increasing faster than they are being harvested.
- Most of the forests in Missouri are privately owned.

JOBS

Wood industry firms and activities support more than 42,000 jobs each year.

- Forests are important to Missourians who enjoy outdoor recreation such as camping, sightseeing, bird watching, canoeing, photographing nature, hunting, or fishing. Many Department of Conservation areas have campsites or are open for primitive camping.
- Forests in Missouri are essential for healthy streams, clean water, wildlife habitat, and environmental stability.

Information from the Missouri Department of Conservation.

CONSERVATION PAYS ITS WAY IN MISSOURI

Missouri Wildlife Recreation

Wildlife Watchers	1.7 million
Total Expenditures	\$940 million
Total Jobs Supported	18,725
Earnings from Expenditures	\$692 million
State and Local Tax Revenue	153 million
Total Business-Generated Revenue	\$1.7 billion



STATE TAX REVENUE INFORMATION

Wildlife watchers in Missouri generate \$153 million annually in state and local taxes.

JOBS

Wildlife-watching activities in Missouri support 18,725 jobs each year.

TAKE A CLOSER LOOK

- In Missouri, adults involved in wildlife watching would fill Arrowhead Stadium in Kansas City more than 22 times.
- Missourians are outdoor oriented — each year they spend 7.8 million days in wildlife-watching activities away from their home. More than 1.5 million enjoy observing, feeding, and photographing wildlife near their homes.
- The amount of sales tax revenue generated by fish, forest, and wildlife recreation is more than the amount of sales tax received by the Department of Conservation from the one-eighth of one percent sales tax — in other words, conservation pays its way in Missouri.

Information from the Missouri Department of Conservation and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation.

Our Pledge to Serve Missourians

The Missouri Department of Conservation's mission, vision, goals, and values communicate our never-ending pledge to serve Missourians and to meet the requirements of the Missouri Constitution (Article IV, Section 40(a) through 46).

Mission

To protect and manage the fish, forest, and wildlife resources of the state; to facilitate and provide opportunity for all citizens to use, enjoy, and learn about these resources.

Vision

The Department shall be a forward looking agency, implementing solid core values ensuring integrity and trust, using adaptive learning and creative thinking, embracing technology and providing superior public service — to be the national leader in fish, forest, and wildlife management proactively advancing our mission through understanding natural resource and social landscapes.

Goals

- ▲ Ensure healthy and sustainable fish, forest, and wildlife resources throughout the state.
- ▲ Manage lands held in public trust and associated infrastructure to ensure continued benefit to citizens and to fish, forest, and wildlife resources.
- ▲ Ensure sound financial accountability and transparency in all areas of operation.
- ▲ Provide opportunities for active citizen involvement in services and conservation education in both rural and urban areas.
- ▲ Engage partners at all levels (individual, community, county, state, federal) to enhance natural resources and effective delivery of conservation services.

Priority/Focus Within All Operational Areas

- ▲ Increase communication and education within and outside the agency
- ▲ Boldly advance research and management
- ▲ Increase citizen involvement and partnerships
- ▲ Grow quality staff

Values/Behaviors of Employees

- ▲ Excellent public service is essential — we work to deliver more than is expected.
- ▲ All citizens are important — we treat citizens the way we would want to be treated.
- ▲ Missourians are partners to achieve conservation success — we communicate openly and look for ways to make it easier to partner.
- ▲ Fairness, objectivity, sound science, integrity, and accountability guide actions — we know conservation best, value each other's time, strive to work at the speed of business not the speed of government, and are transparent.
- ▲ Employees are the Department's most important asset — we all work to advance conservation by being results driven, working as a team, serving as ambassadors for conservation, and living out the conservation ethic through our actions.

Bringing the Goals to Life

Healthy Fish, Forest, and Wildlife

Quail Habitat and Population Monitoring

The Departments' 10-year quail plan focuses our attention on private land cooperatives. Many of Missouri's quail focus areas were developed with the introduction of the Department's quail plan in 2004 and have received our concentrated attention ever since. The Quail Plan is under revision and expected to be completed in FY 16. The Department has successful private land quail focus areas in Cass; Knox and Lewis; Carroll and Caldwell; Wright; Gasconade and Franklin; Scott and Mississippi; Lawrence; Howell; and Stoddard; and Andrew and DeKalb counties.

• **Quail Forever Volunteer Monitoring-Knox County:** The Missouri Department of Conservation began establishing Quail Focus Areas (QFAs) on private lands in 2004. Since the majority of Missouri's landscape is in private ownership (93 percent), habitat improvement programs on private lands have greater potential to impact state-wide quail populations than on public lands alone. Department staff work with landowners to improve quail habitat by providing technical and financial assistance in the focus areas. Some of the practices landowners are implementing are adding or improving woody cover, warm and cool-season grass renovation, adding food plots, and installing native warm-season grass field borders around crop fields. The Missouri Department of Conservation has partnered with private landowners and Quail Forever Whistling Bobs chapter members to monitor quail numbers on the Bee Ridge Focus Area in northeast Missouri. This monitoring effort began in 2008 and is our longest running monitoring effort on private lands. The landowners in the 12,000-acre focus area have established nearly 21 miles of 60-foot-wide quail-friendly buffers. Landowners worked with Private Land Services and Resource Science divisions to design a monitoring strategy. In fall of 2014, there were 3.5 times as many coveys in the focus area where landowners have been improving bobwhite habitat compared to the areas outside the focus area that are not managed. This effort has been highlighted in numerous Department and national publications.

• **Quail Forever Volunteer Monitoring-Scott County:** Quail Forever volunteers and Department staff completed their second year of fall covey monitoring in Scott County. On average, 2.11 coveys /survey point were heard within the Scott County QFA compared to 0.61/point outside the focus area during the October 2014 covey counts. Despite the expiration of the Farm Bill Program, habitat plantings, and less quail observed in the non-managed areas, quail coveys were up nine percent from 2013 in Scott County. In fact, there was a 50 percent increase in quail numbers inside the QFA. The highest numbers of coveys observed were in areas that had been strip-disked in the past year. Conservation partnership staff are excited about the potential quail have with continued management and recent and future landowner enrollment into various Farm Bill Programs. The 2015 spring breeding bird surveys for Scott County showed declines for all species in the control compared to 2014. Twenty-five results showed significant differences between bird populations in the managed area and the control for all species except eastern meadowlarks.

• **2C Focus Area Monitoring-Carroll County Missouri:** In spring 2013, a group of Department staff led by Private Lands Conservationists and Quail Forever biologists began monitoring quail and songbirds in a portion of the 2C Quail Focus Area in Carroll County. The focus area was named "2C" because it covers a large portion of both Carroll and Caldwell counties. This effort is part of a pilot study to start a "Coordinated Implementation Plan" developed by the National Bobwhite Technical Committee as a part of the National Bobwhite Conservation Initiative or NBCI. The NBCI is a unified effort of 25 state fish and wildlife agencies and conservation partners to restore wild populations of bobwhite quail. The goal of the monitoring plan is to document within 5–10 years, if quail habitat management can achieve sustainable bobwhite populations. In June, we conducted our third year of breeding bird monitoring. This year, we saw increases in bird numbers outside the focus area, and a small decline in bird numbers inside the focus area. It was interesting to note that there were increases in all of the species monitored in the control areas. There could be several reasons for the increase. The wet weather delayed

haying, which likely increased available nesting habitat for many of these grassland species. Also, the wet weather has resulted in fewer crops being planted this year. We still have bobwhite numbers that are 2.5 times greater in the focus area than in the areas with no management. Management efforts are still going strong in the focus area with 350 acres added into the Quail SAFE program this year.

Small Game Management

Efforts to attract new small game hunters and retain existing small game hunters continued with the expansion of the Department's Small Game Hunting Prospects. This online publication features information on biology, management, hunting tips, and recommended places to go for over 15 small game species in Missouri. Efforts to increase small game hunting participation by non-traditional users continues with a marketing effort to encourage hunting as a source of local food among locavores, or those interested in healthy foods grown locally.

More effective management for small game on private land and the Department's conservation areas also continues. Research in southwest Missouri progresses in assessing bobwhite quail productivity on extensive grasslands managed with fire and grazing, versus the traditional management model using grass strips, hedgerows, and food plots. A Small Game and Grasslands Management Workshop and a Grasslands and Grazing Lands Management Workshop were held for natural resource managers to teach resource professionals how to best manage grassland ecosystems for bobwhites and other grassland wildlife.

Feral Hogs

Feral hogs have been present in Missouri for many years, but it wasn't until the late 1990s that they started to become a problem in the state, primarily as a result of people intentionally releasing them to establish populations for hunting. Because of their high reproductive rate, new populations quickly expand in size and distribution. The Department's goal is to eradicate feral hogs from the landscape. We have learned from other states and through watching trends in Missouri that hunting does not help to eradicate feral hogs. The Department and partners are now asking citizens to call and report feral hog observations or damage rather than shoot-

ing hogs. When contacted, the Department or U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Wildlife Services send staff to the landowner to help them trap feral hogs. The Department and USDA have both increased feral hog eradication efforts during the last year. The Department has a state feral hog coordinator and eight regional feral hog coordinators who each lead a strike team made up of staff from various divisions. With partners and private landowners, the Department killed 1,821 feral hogs in Missouri between January and June 2015. Trapping, snares, drops nets, shooting, and aerial gunning are all methods used in this eradication effort.

Habitat Beyond Our Borders

Hundreds of Missouri's birds, bats, butterflies, and dragonflies migrate each year, some even reach Central America and the tip of South America. As a land management agency, collaboration with our conservation partners along these migration pathways helps benefit migrating species that also spend time in Missouri. Staff were involved in the writing and production of a book by Robert Gallardo, the *Field Guide to the Birds of Honduras*. A ceremony and public book release was held in January in Peña Blanca, Cortes, Honduras. The book will be a valuable resource to Hondurans, tourists, bird conservationists, and scientists that work in the country, and will help states that participate in international bird conservation to know where shared migrant birds are during migration and winter in Honduras.

The Department continues to assist with bird conservation efforts in Guatemala and Colombia to protect habitat for birds and build local partnerships with landowners. This helps to protect overwintering habitat for species that raise their young in Missouri, like cerulean warblers, Louisiana waterthrushes, worm-eating warblers, wood thrushes, and many other species. One outcome of these efforts are bird-friendly landscape designs for coffee plantations that provide financial gains for landowners equal to their previous practices. These win-win landscape designs benefit both birds and coffee farmers.

Topeka Shiner Restoration

The Topeka shiner is a small minnow that lives in small- to mid-size prairie streams in the central United States. It is usually found in pool and run areas. Populations of the Topeka shiner have

steadily declined. The species now occupies only about 19 percent of its historical habitat and only 15 percent of its former range in Missouri. The Topeka shiner was designated a federally endangered species in 1998.

In 2014, 9,830 Topeka shiners were stocked on the Union Ridge Conservation Area. Orange spotted sunfish were stocked as well since Topeka shiners must lay their eggs in active sunfish nests. This restoration stocking effort will aid a federally endangered minnow in its native habitat.

Brushy Fork Creek Low Water Crossing Replacement

The Department partnered with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation, and Miller County Commission to address an aquatic organism passage issue on Brushy Fork Creek. The former crossing was a concrete structure with pipe culverts. The crossing structure was an impediment to fish passage during low- to normal-flow periods due to elevated culverts on the downstream side. In addition, the culverts were blocked by gravel deposition on the upstream side. The crossing was replaced with a clear span low water crossing, which provided free access to fish and other aquatic life above and below the new structure.

River Basin Management

The Department participates in several interstate, interagency conservation committees and technical work groups to ensure Missouri's fish, forest, and wildlife resources and recreation opportunities are considered during management of large interstate rivers (Mississippi, Missouri and White rivers). Because of this participation, ecosystem restoration programs within the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) have recently helped restore habitat management opportunities on Ted Shanks Conservation Area and the Upper Mississippi Conservation Area. Projects have also increased scientific knowledge of fish and other aquatic organisms on the Upper Mississippi and Missouri rivers and helped the USACE avoid impacts to important river resources during management activities.

In 2015, the Lower Mississippi River Conservation Committee completed the first draft of the Lower Mississippi River Resource Assessment, which will be used to help encourage development of a USACE

program that will enhance river resources, their habitats, and river-related recreation. The Department also hosted a joint meeting of the Upper Mississippi River Conservation Committee and the international Freshwater Mollusk Conservation Society.

Zebra Mussel Treatment on Pomme de Terre Lake

A zebra mussel eradication plan was carried out in March 2015 after a potential introduction of the invasive mussel occurred in December of 2014. Corps of Engineers project staff alerted Department staff to the possible introduction from dock installation on the Lindley arm of Pomme de Terre Lake. The possible introduction area was approximately one acre in size. An eradication plan was developed that identified approximately 3 acres to be treated. The treatment was completed and then zebra mussel samplers were deployed in the potential infected area and downstream on the Lindley arm of the lake.

Movement of invasive species into Missouri waterways continues to be a threat. Check, clean, and dry is still good advice when moving any objects between water bodies to help control the spread of invasive mussels in Missouri.

Wild Turkey Research Project

This 5-year project will provide information that will be used by the Department's Wild Turkey Management Program to monitor wild turkey populations. Project results will also be useful in evaluating the appropriateness of hunting regulations. This past winter, researchers captured more than 320 wild turkeys in Putnam, Schuyler, Monroe, and Marion counties, including 77 adult males and 248 females. All captured wild turkeys were banded and a portion received radio transmitters. After processing, all wild turkeys were released in the same locations in which they were captured. Researchers will radio-track wild turkeys throughout the year to determine gobbler and hen survival. Of central importance will be determining what proportion of banded wild turkeys are harvested by hunters. A toll-free phone number is printed on each leg band so that hunters can report their harvest if they shoot a banded bird. Researchers will also determine what proportion of hens successfully nest and rear young. The Department uses a science-based approach to manage the state's wild turkey population and this research

project is just one of the many ways that the Department obtains the information used in its program.

Pallid Sturgeon Restoration

The 10th year of pallid sturgeon sampling was conducted in fiscal year 2015 with 149 juvenile and adult pallid sturgeon being caught during standard monitoring efforts. The majority were hatchery produced fish (115) from either Blind Pony State Fish Hatchery, Gavins Point National Fish Hatchery or Neosho National Fish Hatchery. Twenty-seven of the sampled sturgeon did not genetically match any parental crosses used during hatchery propagation and are considered wild-origin fish, while seven were of unknown origin. Stocking continued with 7,775 1 to 2-year-old hatchery-raised pallid sturgeon released in FY15.

A study of larval and young-of-the-year sturgeon in partnership with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Missouri River Recovery Program is in its second year. In 2015, 590 larval sturgeon were sampled in the lower stretch of the Missouri River that will be genetically confirmed as shovelnose or pallid sturgeon. Two larval sturgeon sampled in June 2014 were genetically confirmed as being pallid sturgeon and are thought to come from wild parents. This marked the first time genetically confirmed larval pallid sturgeon were sampled on the Missouri River below the dams. This was a significant finding for both the Missouri River Recovery Program and Department staff.

Lake Sturgeon Now Reproducing in Mississippi River

Three decades of lake sturgeon restoration efforts by the Department proved successful when staff confirmed that this fish is once again naturally reproducing in the Mississippi River. This ancient species, which has been around for more than 150 million years, was brought nearly to extinction within the past 50 years due to overharvest and river habitat degradation. In 1984, the Department started raising lake sturgeon in hatcheries and releasing fingerlings into Missouri rivers. For more than three decades, Department staff have looked for signs that the fish were on their way back through natural breeding in these rivers. They got those signs in mid-April through a video shot by a fisherman near West Alton on the Mississippi River. Department staff confirmed from the video that the fish

were lake sturgeon and the behavior was consistent with spawning activity. Staff also examined the site where the video was taken and discovered fertilized eggs. Staff collected 200 eggs to hatch in a lab and confirmed the species as lake sturgeon. They then returned to the site near West Alton and observed recently hatched sturgeon in the river. This final piece of evidence confirmed lake sturgeon were once again reproducing naturally in the Mississippi River.

Wildlife Code Enforcement

The Department enforces laws in the *Wildlife Code*, as well as other state laws for the safe public use of Department-owned lands. Conservation agents contacted 178,828 hunters and anglers in fiscal year 2015 to ensure compliance and provide regulation information. During these contacts, agents noted 25,245 resource violations, issued 3,477 written warnings, and made 7,066 arrests. This resulted in a 91-percent conviction rate for those cases that have been completed.

Elk Management

The purpose of the Elk Restoration Project was to establish a herd of elk in a portion of the restoration area within the Missouri Ozarks. From 2011 to 2013 a total of 108 elk from Kentucky were released on Peck Ranch Conservation Area, and Missouri's elk population has remained relatively stable since. There are an estimated 120–130 elk currently in the population, with a long-term population goal of 400 to 500. A research project currently underway will help biologists understand how current elk survival and reproduction differ from that observed during the initial years after release. The elk's use of different habitats is slowly expanding within the restoration area, but as the population grows, staff expect to see these changes in habitat use.

Elk management on public land conducted in 2015 included 8,021 acres of prescribed fire with 1,017 acres of associated thinnings, 1,200 acres of elk-friendly open ground, and timber harvest completed or ongoing on 1,965 acres. New private land projects include 525 acres of prescribed fire, 35 acres of open ground, and 58 acres of timber thinnings. Nearly 70 private landowners have improved a total of 2,800 acres for elk.

Elk information was presented at 28 different venues in 2015, ranging from technical presentations and sportsman groups to local school events.

Wildfire Suppression

The Department worked with fire departments across the state to suppress 2,923 wildfires that consumed 22,044 acres. These numbers are down from previous years due to the wet spring. The leading cause of wildfire continues to be the use of fire to dispose of debris. Staff are required to attend in-house fire training prior to responding to wildfire. In addition, 198 Department employees are trained and hold national fire qualifications. This training is required to work on national incidents.

In fiscal year 2015, Missouri firefighters with national fire qualifications were requested to assist with suppression efforts in western United States. Three 20-person, interagency fire crews were sent to assist with fire suppression in Montana and Idaho. A total of 42 Department staff participated in western fire duty this year. Participation allowed Missouri firefighters to gain additional training and experience, which is beneficial for responding to fires and other disasters in Missouri.

Chronic Wasting Disease Update

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is a fatal disease that affects the deer family. The Department began testing free-range deer for the disease in 2001. In 2010 and 2011, CWD was discovered in captive deer in Missouri at private hunting preserves in Linn and Macon counties. The disease was first detected in Missouri's free-range deer herd in northwest Macon county in 2012.

The Department continues to test deer for CWD statewide. With the help of hunters and landowners, more than 43,000 deer have been tested for CWD. In the 2014–2015 deer season, the Department tested a total of 1,742 animals from the six-county CWD Containment Zone (consisting of Linn, Macon, Chariton, Randolph, Sullivan, and Adair counties) and an additional 1,701 animals throughout the remainder of the state. Of those, 16 deer tested positive for CWD; 9 in Macon County (all within the CWD Core Area), 6 in Adair County, and 1 in Cole County.

This year marked the third year of the Department's CWD Surveillance and Management Plan. The Department is currently updating and renew-

ing the plan and is reaching out to stakeholders for input through correspondence and public meetings.

Guide to Wildlife Diseases Produced

The Wildlife Health Program of the Resource Science Division joined forces with the Department's Outreach and Education Division to produce a *Field Guide to the Diseases of Missouri Fish and Wildlife*. This soft cover, pocket-sized book provides a handy reference for Department staff as well as the public when they come across a sick or dead animal. Diseases of fish and wildlife are clearly separated into color-coded sections. In addition to having a full color photo to help with quick field identification, each disease's chapter has information on outward signs that indicate the disease, what species are most commonly infected, does the diseased animal pose a health risk to people or pets, what causes the disease, and how best to protect oneself while dealing with the diseased animal. This publication has already proved extremely useful and promises to be a valuable reference for years to come.

Muskie Management

Muskie sampling in the Southwest Region was completed on Pomme de Terre Lake and Fellows Lake.

On Pomme de Terre Lake, a total of 203 muskies were captured for a catch rate of 10.2 fish per net day, compared to 5.4 and 7.0 per net day in 2013 and 2012, respectively.

- 36 percent of the fish were greater than the 36-inch minimum-length limit, compared to 31 percent and 25 percent in 2013 and 2012.
- 14 percent were greater than 40 inches, compared to 5 percent in 2013 and 3 percent in 2012.

During muskie sampling efforts on Fellows Lake in early April, a total of 63 muskies were captured for a total catch-per-unit-effort of 3.0 per net night.

- Muskies captured varied in length from 13.0–44.8 inches
- Weights varied from 0.5–33.8 pounds.

Catch data continues to show a gradual recovery of the population since the drought, heat wave and historically low water levels in 2012, which had significant negative impacts on the Fellows Lake muskie fishery.

Taneycomo Trout Sampling

The annual Lake Taneycomo trout sampling was completed in August 2015. Rainbow trout were cap-

tured at an overall catch rate of 265 fish per hour. Size structure and body condition have increased slightly from 2014 sampling. The largest rainbow trout collected during the sampling was 22.7 inches and weighed 7.1 pounds. A total of 700,488 rainbow trout were stocked in Lake Taneycomo in 2014.

Brown trout were collected at 70 fish per hour. Size structure was slightly decreased but body condition remained similar to 2014 sampling efforts. A total of 15,096 brown trout were stocked in 2014. The increase in stocking of brown trout from 10,000 to 15,000 in the past five years has contributed greatly to the rebound of this fishery and will continue through 2016. The largest brown trout collected was 30.3 inches and weighed 17.6 pounds.

Urban Fishing

During 2014, 42 urban lakes were managed for fishing. A total of 133,898 keeper-sized fish were stocked in these lakes; this included 78,168 channel catfish and 55,730 rainbow trout.

Cold-Water Fish Hatcheries

In 2014, cold-water hatcheries stocked 615,800 trout. These fish were distributed in four trout parks, 12 stream special management areas, and Lake Taneycomo. There were 326,938 daily adult and 65,095 daily youth tags sold at the trout parks. Anglers purchased 97,602 annual trout fishing permits.

Warm-Water Fish Hatcheries

In 2014, 11.6 million fish were stocked in public waters. Highlights include:

- Blind Pony Hatchery and Hunnewell produced 58,084 hybrid striped bass.
- Lost Valley Hatchery produced 11,011 muskie for stocking in Pomme de Terre, Hazel Creek Lake, Fellows Lake, and Busch Area Lake 35.
- Blind Pony Hatchery produced 12,109 paddlefish for stocking in Table Rock Lake.
- Chesapeake Hatchery produced 81,842 stock-sized channel catfish.
- Hunnewell and Chesapeake hatcheries produced 9,778 hybrid sunfish for use in kids' fishing clinics.
- Hatcheries produced 171,493 channel catfish that were stocked statewide.
- Mature walleye were captured from Bull Shoals Lake and Lake of the Ozarks and transported to Lost Valley and Chesapeake hatcheries to produce fry and fingerling walleye. More than 5.3 million

fry and more than 1.5 million fingerlings were stocked in seven Missouri lakes and one river.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

Fiscal Year 2015 was the first year five percent of state EQIP funds, administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service, were designated specifically to address wildlife conservation practices through a designated Wildlife Funding Pool. Only those landowners interested in addressing wildlife habitat are eligible to apply for these funds. In FY15, a total of \$2,296,771 of EQIP funding was available for wildlife habitat restoration and forestry management practices. Specifically, \$956,988 of EQIP funds were available through the new wildlife funding pool and \$1,339,783 was available for conservation practices completed on forestland.

Conservation Reserve Program

In response to the continued loss of Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres in Missouri and due to the tremendous impact CRP has in protecting our soil, water, and wildlife habitat, the Department launched, in December 2012, financial incentives for enrolling new continuous CRP (CCRP) acres and enhancing existing CRP lands in 62 counties across Missouri. To date, the Department has invested \$1 million to improve this essential wildlife habitat on the Missouri landscape.

As of August 2015, the the Department's CRP Incentive helped:

- Enroll a total of 10,665 acres of CP33 — Habitat Buffers for Upland Birds, CP38 — State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement, and CP42 — Pollinator Habitat. In FY15, 3,128 acres were enrolled.
- Complete 169.4 acres of downed tree structures (brush piles) and edge feathering on and surrounding CRP fields. Funds have been obligated to complete 28.7 acres in FY15.
- Complete 3,434 acres of mid-contract management on existing CRP fields using a combination of practices such as prescribed burn plus herbicide application, herbicide application plus legume/forb interseeding, and mowing plus disking. In FY15, funds were obligated to complete 393 acres.
- Complete 1,692 acres of woody cover enhancement by applying herbicide along and under tree lines surrounding existing CRP fields. Funds have been obligated to complete 1,052 acres in FY14.

Private Wetland Conservation

The Wetland Reserve Easement (WRE) is an important Farm Bill program administered by Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) for wetland conservation across the state of Missouri. Missouri received roughly \$6.1 million for WRE acquisitions and restorations last year. This funding supported the enrollment of 22 new easements totaling 1,667 acres. Missouri maintains the sixth highest number of WRE acres and the third highest number of easements. At least 154,395 acres of wetlands have been restored through the WRE and the Emergency Wetland Protection Program in Missouri. About 93 percent of these acres are enrolled in perpetual easements and will provide water quality benefits, flood abatement, and essential habitat for resident and migratory birds into the future.

The Wetland Reserve Enhancement Program (WREP) is a cooperative program between NRCS and the Missouri Department of Conservation that provides funding opportunities to enhance wildlife habitat on existing WRE easements. In total, WREP directly impacted 16 WRP easements in five counties with 3,013 acres improved throughout the length of the program and \$417,105 expended.

Habitat Challenge Grant

This is the eighth year the Department provided the Habitat Challenge Grant. This past fiscal year, the Department awarded \$131,000 in funding to partner organizations, including Quail Forever, National Wild Turkey Federation, and Quail and Upland Wildlife Federation, Inc. Each organization provides matching funds to help private landowners complete habitat work. Over the last eight years the Department has provided more than \$900,000 in funding through the grant, totaling more than \$1.8 million with partner contributions.

Regional Conservation Partnership Program

The Department of Conservation and the United States Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) have partnered to provide \$739,000 to private landowners for improvement to wildlife habitat and water quality on forest and pasture lands in FY15. The funding is part of the new NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). This funding marks the first year in an anticipated five-year project that will provide

more than \$3.6 million directly to private landowners for conservation over the life of the project.

Funding is available through two separate RCPP projects: the Grassland Bird and Grazing Land Enhancement Initiative and the Restoring Glade and Woodland Communities for Threatened Species. The goal of the grazing land enhancement program is to make conservation practices available to producers that help meet both livestock production objectives and provide wildlife habitat on the same operation. Funding is also available to reimburse landowners for restorations or management of glades and woodlands through the Glade and Woodland RCPP project. The first enrollment period for both projects was held in FY15 with a very positive response from private landowners. There were approximately 100 applications in the Grassland Bird and Grazing Land Enhancement and 67 Restoring Glade and Woodland Communities RCPP projects.

Hellbender Restoration

Progress has continued in efforts to propagate and restore the Ozark and eastern hellbender. The Department's Shepherd of the Hills Hatchery in Branson and the Saint Louis Zoo's Ron Goellner Center for Hellbender Conservation, with support from other agencies and private citizens, have been partnering to halt the decline of the species via cutting-edge propagation efforts while addressing the reasons for the decline. Currently, the hatchery is rearing several hundred eastern hellbenders obtained from eggs collected in the wild. Captive-breeding of Ozark hellbenders continued at the St. Louis Zoo for the fourth consecutive year, resulting in 633 larval salamanders in autumn 2014. In addition, the zoo is rearing approximately 4,000 larval and juvenile hellbenders obtained from eggs collected in the wild and eggs obtained from captive-breeding in previous years. During the summer of 2014, 713 Ozark hellbenders raised at the zoo were released in their native Ozark rivers. These hellbenders will be monitored to determine the success of captive-reared hellbenders in the wild. These achievements will not only buy time to further address the decline of the species, but will likely be the "safety net" needed to save this unique native of the cold-water streams of the Ozark Highlands.

Deer Survival Project

The Missouri Department of Conservation and the University of Missouri are working together to evaluate white-tailed deer survival and movements. The information from this study will have long-term application to deer population models, disease management protocols, and localized deer management efforts as science-based components to guide Missouri's deer management.

The study began in January 2015 and will include five years of field work. The project is being conducted in two areas to account for contrasting habitats, amounts of public land, and harvest regulations, which can impact deer survival and movement. This includes four Ozark counties (Douglas, Howell, Texas and Wright) and four northwest counties (Andrew, DeKalb, Gentry and Nodaway). Annually, deer in both areas are captured and fitted with GPS collars to maintain adequate sample sizes reduced by natural and hunting mortalities, as well as deer maturing to older ages. Adult deer are captured from January through March using traps and nets. Fawns are captured during May and June. In 2015, 100 adult deer and 56 fawns were captured and collared.

Local landowner support has been greatly valuable for the success of this project. This project is supported by partial funding assistance provided by Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Funds.

Ruffed Grouse Habitat Management and Population Restoration

In response to declining grouse numbers, the River Hills Forest Habitat Partnership was formed in 2000 with an objective of restoring and maintaining young oak-hickory forests within the region of Boone, Callaway, Warren and Montgomery counties. Recent research shows that although suitable habitat in the River Hills Region is currently lacking, it is likely that grouse restoration could be successful if the amount of young forested habitat on public and private land was increased considerably and maintained through time. The Department has been working to increase the amount of young forest habitat on two Warren County conservation areas. To complement the effort, the Department and members of the Missouri Grouse Chapter of the Quail and Upland Wildlife Federation have been working to develop a private landowner cooperative in the River Hills Region. Once enough habitat is

available, grouse restoration could start in the next few years.

Black Bear Survival and Recruitment

Black bears are an important resource in Missouri for their value as a game species and their contributions to biodiversity and ecosystem health. We intend to propose a hunting season when the state population exceeds 500 animals. To ensure a sustainable bear population and minimize conflicts with humans, it is important to know how many bears there are in Missouri and how fast the population is growing. We estimated the bear population was 280 animals in 2012. We do not know the growth rate of Missouri's bear population and are currently measuring the number of cubs produced each year and the survival of female bears so that we can forecast future growth. Capture efforts to date include 109 individual bears including 64 males and 45 females. Ages at capture, determined from tooth sections, ranged from 1–16 years. We visited 19 bear dens this past winter and counted 20 cubs, 14 males, and six females. We are currently monitoring 38 collared bears for survival.

Endangered Species

Department staff annually monitor many of the 36 federally endangered or threatened plant and wildlife species in the state. A notable highlight is the ongoing effort to work cooperatively with partners and communities to recover populations of the threatened Niangua darter. Last year, two low-water crossings on the Niangua River that were once barriers to fish movement were replaced for a total of 12 improved crossings since 2004. Once all planned crossing projects have been completed, more than 62 miles of barrier-free contiguous stream habitat will exist in the Niangua River watershed, ensuring Niangua darters have access to spawning sites and their populations do not become isolated. Additionally, efforts are in full swing to pro-actively engage landowners within the Little Niangua River priority geography to implement conservation practices that target livestock exclusion, alternative livestock watering, riparian corridor enhancement, and stream bank stabilization.

The Hine's emerald dragonfly lives exclusively in unique wetlands known as fens during its larval stage. Mark-recapture surveys conducted over the past two years in partnership with the U.S. Fish and

Wildlife Service, Missouri Department of Natural Resources, and Illinois State Museum have revealed that the population of these dragonflies at two Missouri fens is much higher than expected. Because this species depends on fens, pollution of fen watersheds is a primary threat. Through these agencies' partnership, the watersheds of these fens have been delineated to improve future management and development plans to prevent contamination of these fens. Additional surveys and fen delineations are planned.

Many of Missouri's bat species are threatened by the disease white-nose syndrome (WNS), which has spread rapidly across the eastern U.S. and appeared in Missouri in 2009. To slow spread of the disease and to reduce disturbance during hibernation, access to most caves on public lands during the winter now requires a permit, and many hibernacula have been gated to prevent unauthorized entry. The Department is also taking additional measures to reduce potential impacts to maternity colonies of federally-listed endangered bats during management practices, such as tree thinning and prescribed fire. The Department devoted almost 2,000 staff hours this summer to bat surveys for management projects on five sites in northeast Missouri where maternity colonies of the endangered Indiana bat are most likely to be found. By identifying trees used by maternity colonies and avoiding disturbance in these areas during sensitive periods, the Department can minimize potential impacts to maternity colonies and thereby enhance the opportunity for Indiana bat populations to recover.

Invasive Species Strike Team

The Invasive Species Strike Team is working to reduce threats from invasive weed species in Southeast Missouri and the Eastern Ozarks. Directed by local Department staff, trained crews from AmeriCorps scouted and treated over 300 miles of highway right of ways identified as highest priority. More than 3,265 acres were covered with a total cost of approximately \$94,000, including labor, lodging, chemicals, and supplies. The impact to these exotic species populations is significant, with an estimated reduction of these populations near 90 percent in treated areas. Department staff do work on conservation areas, but invasive species movement and control go well beyond those borders. The highway right of way efforts help limit the spread into new

areas. It is also an opportunity to partner and educate other organizations to meet our mission.

Furbearer Update and Market Forecast

Strong fur prices in 2013–2014 resulted in increased permit sales during 2014–2015. Fur prices, however, dropped dramatically throughout the season resulting in reduced harvest of most species. The Department issued over 10,000 trapping permits as trappers anticipated high fur sales. Muskrats bucked the trend of lower harvest, mostly because prices remained strong until late in the harvest season. Recent survey data suggest over 13,000 hunters pursued raccoons and over 25,000 hunters pursued coyotes this past year. Forecasts for 2015–2016 are poor as most fur houses have high inventories of all species.

A Comprehensive Approach to Conservation

The Department's species and habitat conservation program continues to become more strategic through the ongoing development of the Comprehensive Conservation Strategy (CCS). The CCS is a process that identifies Missouri conservation priorities to inform decision-making regarding the greatest opportunities for sustainable conservation of fish, forest, and wildlife. Since the initiation of CCS in January 2012, the Department has been working to integrate guidance from landscape-level assessments (i.e., State Wildlife Action Plan, Aquatic GAP, Forest Action Plan, Fisheries Priority Watersheds), as well as species plans, area plans, and recovery plans, into a common strategy. Investing in a landscape-scale approach provides efficiency by conserving the landscapes and functions that support a variety of species rather than trying to provide the needs of individual species. Healthy landscape-level habitat systems yield a myriad of benefits, including clean water, healthy game populations, diverse flora and fauna, marketable forest products, and expanded outdoor recreation opportunity. The Comprehensive Conservation Strategy will be the first in the nation to fully integrate the Forest Action Plan, Fisheries Watershed Priorities, and State Wildlife Action Plan into a common framework for conservation action.

The Department has identified nine key landscape priorities called priority geographies with significant habitat potential for increased conserva-

tion efforts, partnerships, and investment to ensure long-term landscape health of each geography's characteristic habitat systems. The Department has identified conservation objectives for each geography and work within these geographies is increasing conservation delivery for essential habitat systems, including forests and woodlands, savannas, prairies and grasslands, glades, caves and karst, wetlands, and rivers and streams. While these geographies will receive increased attention, the Department continues management of all other conservation opportunities throughout the state to deliver upon its mission and goals.

Missouri Ozark Forest Ecosystem Project

The Missouri Ozark Forest Ecosystem Project (MOFEP) is a landscape scale, long-term experiment to study the impact of different types of forest management on plant and animal populations in the Missouri oak-hickory forests. MOFEP began in the early 1990's, with the first timber harvest in 1996 and the second timber harvest completed in 2011. MOFEP is designed to continue at least another 80 years, which is when the 1996 harvest areas are projected to fully recover. MOFEP highlights from fiscal year 2015 include:

- **Hardmast project:** Nuts produced in Missouri's forests are known as hardmast. This includes acorns from oak trees, walnuts, and hickory nuts. Hardmast is an important food source for many wildlife species, including deer and turkeys, in addition to creating the newest generation of tree seedlings. Researchers collected oak acorns from MOFEP study sites over 18 years (1993–2010), and recently published their results. Results indicated that some types of forest management, which involve cutting a few trees throughout a patch of forest, don't significantly reduce the number of acorns available to grow into new trees or feed wildlife. This means that some timber harvests can be performed without heavily impacting hardmast production in the Missouri Ozarks.
- **Songbird Project:** Interns and technicians were employed during the 2014 and 2015 field seasons to evaluate the effects of forest management on migrant songbirds that use the Ozark forest. Data collected were used to measure forest bird density, provide an index to bird composition and abundance, and determine reproductive success,

nest predation, and brood parasitism. Researchers have collected bird data on the MOFEP study sites for 25 years (1991–2015), and recently published two publications. In general, forest harvest reduces the abundance of some bird species that nest in mature forest, but provides nesting habitat for species that depend on young regenerating forest. Management has not had a negative effect on nest success or brood parasitism.

- **Ground Flora and Soft Mast:** During the summer of 2014, a hardy crew of 12 botanists recorded vegetation data on 648 plots. A total of 520 species of plants were recorded. The un-harvested sites had the fewest plant species, with an average of 37 species per plot. The sites that were harvested had many more species, on average 52–57 species per plot. Some of the most common non-woody understory plants were hog peanut, Virginia snakeroot, violet lespedeza, licorice bedstraw, wild yam, false Solomon's seal, and bristly sunflower. While native weedy plants like horseweed, American burnweed, and pokeweed were more common in the recently harvested areas, these areas were also important for soft mast (berry) production. Over 40 soft mast species are tracked and the number of berries in the plots are counted. Overall, blackberries were the most common soft mast species, but pokeweed produced the most berries. Berry production was greatest in the recently harvested areas. In unharvested areas, Carolina buckthorn was the top berry producer. Populations of two rare plants — heartleaf noseburn (*Tragia cordata*) and Reznicek's sedge (*Carex reznicekii*) — are found on MOFEP but are in areas where tree removal did not occur.

Manage Lands in Public Trust

Leadership in Grassland Management

The Department identified grassland conservation opportunity areas (COAs) as part of Missouri's updated State Wildlife Action Plan. Three have been specifically selected as priority geographies to represent immediate grassland and savanna conservation emphasis: Grand River Grasslands, Spring Creek Watershed, and Upper Osage Grasslands. Each includes key Department or partner-protected lands within a matrix of privately owned, working lands. Conservation actions within these geogra-

phies include the promotion of best management practices, using fire, grazing, and other management tools to restore and monitor remnant and reconstructed prairies and savannas.

Wildlife staff, in partnership with Audubon's Prairie Bird Initiative, made significant headway toward defining and implementing market-based conservation incentives to improve privately-owned grazing lands for birds and other wildlife. Grassland Coordinator Max Alleger traveled to assist partners in Texas, Wyoming, Colorado, and the Dakotas in the development of auditable, bird-friendly grazing protocols. The Department also joined a number of agricultural groups in co-sponsoring the 2015 Grass-fed Exchange meeting in Columbia, which attracted more than 300 grass-fed cattle producers to discuss grazing strategies that benefit the environment and producers. Missouri River Bird Observatory (MRBO) continued surveys of breeding and migratory birds on more than 50 public and private tracts in Missouri's grassland priority to log and analyze bird locations and track shifts in species density and habitat use patterns over time. MRBO surveyed more than 40,000 acres and documented more than 6,500 individual priority birds.

Substantial progress was made on large-scale grassland restoration projects at Linscomb and Schell-Osage Conservation Areas and Wayne Helton Memorial Wildlife Area to restore nearly 2,000 acres of grassland by removing undesirable trees and invasive plants from historical grassland, helping both common and rare grassland wildlife.

Trip Advisor Certificate of Excellence

In June 2015, the Runge and Springfield Conservation Nature Centers received TripAdvisor® Certificate of Excellence awards. The accolade, which honors hospitality excellence, is given only to establishments that consistently achieve outstanding traveler reviews on TripAdvisor and is extended to qualifying businesses worldwide.

Public Input on Area Plans

The Department manages 955 properties (totaling nearly 1 million acres) statewide for the purpose of restoring and conserving fish, forest, and wildlife resources and providing appropriate public use, research, and demonstration areas. Conservation area management plans document strategies for natural resource management and public use on

conservation areas. In fiscal year 2015, staff drafted 58 plans that cover 85 conservation areas and river accesses. These draft plans will be available for a public comment period during fiscal year 2016.

In fiscal year 2015, 69 area plans (covering 115 areas) were posted for public comment. Additional comments were received during "high interest" idea gathering open-house forums for August A. Busch Memorial Conservation Area, James A. Reed Memorial Wildlife Area, Columbia Bottom Conservation Area, Eagle Bluffs Conservation Area, and August A. Busch Jr. Memorial Wetlands at Four Rivers Conservation Area. Over 400 public comments were collected.

Public review of area plans offers an opportunity for Missourians to comment about the management of a specific conservation area. Following the comment period, comments are summarized and the final version of the area plan includes responses to public comment categories. Area plan comment opportunities and final plans may be found online at mdc.mo.gov/areaplans.

Duck Creek Conservation Area Dedication

On October 11, the Department of Conservation and Ducks Unlimited invited the public to attend a celebration and dedication of the Duck Creek Conservation Area in Bollinger, Stoddard, and Wayne counties celebrating the renovations completed to date. The Golden Anniversary Wetlands Initiative, launched in 2004, is an ambitious partnership to rehabilitate and enhance wetlands at five of the Department's oldest wetland conservation areas (Schell Osage, B.K. Leach, Montrose, Duck Creek, and Fountain Grove). Managers at these areas face an array of challenges as they have reached, or soon will reach, their 50th anniversary.

The original infrastructure of these areas has outlived reasonable life expectancy. In addition, the science and art of wetland management and engineering, design, and construction capabilities has drastically evolved from five decades ago. This event marked significant progress of the Duck Creek renovation, public support of the improvements, and assurance to foster the next generation of waterfowl hunters.

Continuous Forest Inventory

In 2010, the Department embarked on a mission to better monitor Department forestlands. The Continuous Forest Inventory program is designed to collect and report on the condition of the forest in a statistically sound manner and report the findings annually. The demand for timely, consistent, and reliable information regarding the condition of Department forestlands is in high demand. The project is long-range in nature. Our goal is to install 462 plots over five years. In fiscal year 2015, we installed the remaining 92 plots.

Forest Best Management Practices

The Department implemented and maintained soil and water conservation best management practices for all forest management activities on conservation areas. The Department monitors and documents compliance on all timber sales. Forestry Regional Supervisors conduct follow up inspections of all timber sales on their region. All active timber sales were routinely inspected for contract compliance, including the implementation of best management practices.

Public Land Management

The Department continues to conduct active management on Department lands for all wildlife and their habitats. This year, Department staff conducted habitat management on nearly 185,000 acres of public land to include: 40,247 acres of wetland, 25,415 acres of woodland/forest/savanna, 75,324 acres of cropland (63,857 acres through permittee farmers and 11,467 acres in food plots), 33,441 acres of grassland/prairie, 17,209 acres of old fields, and 646 acres of glade. In addition, forest and woodland habitat improvements were conducted on 64,745 acres of state land. This included thinning young trees on 4,647 acres, eradicating invasive plants on 5,508 acres, post-sale cultural work on 429 acres, prescribed fires on 6,704 acres, 236 acres of tree planting, and tree harvest on 4,769 acres.

State Forest Nursery

The State forest nursery annually grows and distributes close to 3 million seedling trees of more than 60 species. The seedlings include trees and shrubs suitable for reforestation and wildlife habitat restoration. The seedlings are planted on both public and private lands statewide. The nursery filled more than 10,000 orders involving more than 20,000 pack-

ages of seedlings, with a customer satisfaction rate of more than 99 percent.

Land Acquisition —

For conservation and public use, about 5,472 acres were purchased and approximately 88 acres were donated. Department land purchases included additions to: Black Island Conservation Area, Fountain Grove Conservation Area, Donaldson Point Conservation Area, Union Ridge Conservation Area, White Ranch Conservation Area, and Lamine River Conservation Area. The donated land is a new conservation area in Clark County.

Construction

- Busiek Conservation Area footbridge replacement
- Conservation Commission Headquarters ground coupled heat pumps
- Conservation Commission Headquarters parking lot "D" renovation
- Duck Creek Conservation Area Greenbriar tract and Pool 1 fishing access
- Four Rivers Conservation Area Unit 4 floodway repairs
- Henges Shooting Range temporary lighting improvements
- Hunnewell Fish Hatchery Phase 1 kettle replacement
- Roaring River Hatchery recirculating pump improvement
- Rocky Fork Lakes Conservation Area shooting range upgrade
- Runge Conservation Nature Center exhibit planning and design
- Salem Maintenance Center sign shop roof replacement

Unstaffed Shooting Range Renovation

The Department completed renovation of the Rocky Forks Lake Conservation Shooting Range in October 2014. The range now sports a pistol range with a two-person shooting booth with moveable targets set at 7, 10, and 15 yards. It now also offers two rifle ranges with shooting benches and seats for shooters, with shooting distances of 25, 50, 75, and 100 yards.

The shotgun field is now all weather. This will also help improve the shooting experience by making it easier to position portable clay target throwers to throw between two red barber poles in the field.

Safety modifications made to the range consist of re-facing the main backstop to prevent erosion and to reduce the potential for ricochets and increasing the height of the berm. Other conveniences now in place include ADA-accessible parking and sidewalks and re-graded grounds to decrease standing water after rain.

Sound Financial Accountability

Conservation Goals and Priorities

The Department developed goals and conservation priorities for fiscal year 2015 to serve as an annual strategic plan. The conservation priorities address the most important conservation challenges within the next three years. To increase communication of the goals and priorities, a brochure and video presentation were prepared about the Department's mission, vision, goals, and priorities.

Fish Trades Benefit Missouri Anglers

Department fish hatcheries operate as a system, providing species or species at sizes not readily available from other sources. On occasion, we have fish in excess of our needs to meet fish stocking plans or a need for species that our hatcheries do not have readily available. Staff coordinates through the Mid-Continent Fish Conference each year. This process allows fish hatchery managers across the country to barter with surpluses or obtain fish needs from others.

In 2014, the Department sent blue catfish, bluegill, and channel catfish fry to Iowa; blue catfish to Kansas; channel catfish to Wyoming; and walleye eggs to Oklahoma and Arkansas. In addition the Department sent pallid sturgeon eggs to South Dakota and pallid sturgeon fry, fingerlings, and sub adults to Neosho National Fish Hatchery in Neosho, Mo.

In return the Department received alligator gar from Oklahoma; hybrid striped bass fry from Kansas, Oklahoma, and Arkansas; lake sturgeon sub adults and eggs from Wisconsin; musky from Iowa; and pallid sturgeon from the Neosho National fish Hatchery in Neosho, Mo.

Our cooperation with other states helps us to meet our goal of providing additional specialty fishing opportunities to Missouri citizens.

Timber Sale Administration

The Department enhanced timber sale administration by encouraging the use of pre-harvest planning, the use of performance-based timber sale administration, and the best bid system. By encouraging the use of pre-harvest planning, timber sale administrators and Professional Timber Harvesters (PTH), loggers work together to lay out and design the most effective and efficient timber harvesting operations. Proper planning is the first step in the effective implementation of best management practices for protecting water quality. The performance-based timber sale administration system ties the sale administration directly to the timber sale contract. The best bid system has dramatically reduced issues on sales and time needed to monitor sales. By encouraging staff to attend PTH training, we get a better understanding of the complex nature of the mechanics involved in felling and extracting our timber resources. These efforts will serve as an example and encourage loggers to perform at a higher level.

State Forest Nursery Procedures

The State Nursery updated its procedures for tracking inventory and delivery of seedlings. Prior to FY15, seedling inventory was recorded on paper and online orders were re-entered along with mail orders into the tracking system. An electronic system was developed to integrate these activities. Online orders are automatically loaded into the system with entered mail in orders. Ungraded and graded seedling inventory will be tracked electronically, allowing for quicker decisions on lifting and grading needs. Customers can now pay for seedlings online if desired.

Human Resources Processes

The Human Resources Division is continuing down the path toward automating and streamlining the human resources processes. This will be our second year utilizing the new benefits administration system, but our first year relying solely on data captured in the new system.

Department-wide Training

The Professional Development Steering Committee and Safety Committee identified current and future state-wide training needs, which were implemented through the Professional Development Academy.

New Employee Orientation offers the first introduction to training and awareness of diversity and harassment. Policies and procedures courses were offered statewide to educate employees on federal and state employment laws, including a refresher on diversity, harassment, and safety. The Statewide and Regional Safety committees offered various safety courses statewide and hosted safety-related courses, fairs, and events. This year an Interview Skills Training course was introduced and well-received within the Department. This course is designed to help salaried and hourly employees and supervisors successfully navigate the interview process.

Health Benefits

The Conservation Employees' Benefits Plan (CEBP) extended medical plan coverage to eligible hourly employees effective January 1, 2015. Fourteen elected to sign up for the insurance. Hourly employees who work a minimum of 1,560 hours within a designated 12-month time period were offered coverage in compliance with the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA). The Limited High Deductible Health Plan was created to meet requirements of affordability and was implemented as the plan option for hourly employees. Human Resources Division benefits staff, along with the CEBP Board, continue to monitor requirements of the PPACA and potential impact to the plan. Staff continues to advise the CEBP Board of Trustees regarding mandatory requirements of this legislation. Benefits staff also maintain a close working relationship with the benefits administration system vendor to improve and simplify processes to better meet member needs.

Internships Encourage Diversity

The Department experienced a significant increase in volume with regard to the internship program in 2015. The number of requests for internship positions doubled from past years. We were able to successfully fill 15 internship positions. Objectives are threefold: expose students to a variety of professional tasks and the Department's culture, mentor promising students in disciplines in which job candidates are scarce, and attract students with diverse cultural backgrounds to contribute to the Department's workforce. In fiscal year 2015, students from 13 colleges and universities worked in the intern-

ship positions. With our internship program now receiving attention at a national level, we are able to attract an even more diverse applicant pool.

Disaster Relief

The Department's Disaster Incident Command System is prepared to assist with Missouri disaster situations. At the request of Missouri's State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA), Department staff provide services to affected communities, which includes using heavy equipment, ATVs, boats, and vehicles for various requests. Staff also provide security detail and traffic control when needed.

Rural Forest Fire Equipment Center

The Rural Forest Fire Equipment Center needed several improvements in FY15. The lower lot was graveled and fenced. This was needed for several reasons. Federal Excess Property is stored on this lot and all-weather access is critical. The Department is also responsible for this property while it is in our possession. Fencing was critical to control vandalism and eliminate a safety concern for children in nearby homes that would play on the equipment. Several garage doors were also replaced since the old ones were worn out and would not open or close properly. A new inventory system was also developed to improve record keeping and the ability to track equipment much more efficiently.

Citizen Involvement/Education

Urban Conservation and Partnerships

Community Conservation Planners work to deliver natural resource technical services at the municipal, county, and regional levels with communities, city planners, and developers. Recent accomplishments include:

- Conducted 80 urban conservation assistance efforts, visited 23 urban project sites covering 2,440 acres, and wrote 15 plans for 117 acres in urban communities that together reached 1,045 people.
- Reviewed six plans for city/county government agencies, regional planning councils, non-governmental organizations, non-profit organizations, water and wastewater districts, and landowners.

- Reached 3,427 participants with technical knowledge through 20 programs, events and workshops.
- Conducted six media events to promote community conservation.
- Completed the Back to Nature at Queeny Park pilot project with St. Louis County Parks Department, St. Louis Audubon Society, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Monsanto, and other identified partners.
- Worked with over 30 non-government and government entities to create the Kansas City Native Plant Initiative.
- Administered \$25,000 in Community Conservation Grants for four projects in Kansas City region.
- Two Missouri Local Environmental Advisory Forum Open Houses were held in the Southwest region.
- Held the 5th Annual RiverFest education event with the Healthy Rivers Project and Little Blue River Watershed Alliance. Over 2,000 people attended.
- Held the first annual Revolving Green Around the Blue to raise awareness of the value of the Blue River.
- Held the Missouri River Watershed Festival. One hundred and eighty students attended and learned much about Community Conservation and its value to their communities.

Community Conservation

Conservation efforts in urban areas educate many Missourians and expose them to natural habitats and outdoor opportunities that may not otherwise be available. Urban wildlife biologists also help to manage wildlife populations that can cause problems when overpopulated, like deer and Canada geese.

Urban deer populations can cause conflict in densely populated areas due to deer-vehicle collisions or property damage. Surveys were sent to Springfield residents who checked a deer in Greene County during the 2014 archery season in an effort to learn more about the deer herd around Springfield. Department staff in Kansas City worked with private landowners, Jackson County Parks staff, and Kansas City Parks and Recreation staff to provide deer hunting opportunities for 903 hunters on 145 properties in the city, resulting in 602 deer harvested. In St. Louis, staff provided assistance to six municipalities dealing with suburban deer manage-

ment issues; staff assisted with managed hunts, suburban archery hunting on private property, special permits for deer harvest, and deer surveys.

The Community Conservation Grant Program awarded a combined total of \$100,000 to five urban habitat restoration and monitoring projects in the St. Louis metropolitan area. Projects included urban native bee monitoring, prairie reconstruction, and woodland restoration. Support continues for the restoration of the Calvary Cemetery prairie remnant, located in northern St. Louis City. The project area was seeded with Calvary-origin native warm season grass seed in early 2015. The Department also expanded the Community Conservation Grant Program from St. Louis to include communities in southwestern Missouri. Grant monies will be distributed for projects promoting the restoration or establishment of native habitats in and around urban and suburban areas.

The Department also continued to partner with Kansas City Power and Light and American Century Investments to host five peregrine falcon pairs in nesting boxes built high on downtown buildings. Kansas City Power and Light and American Century both provided the public with two live-streaming web cameras on the nest boxes. Staff banded 13 falcon chicks from these nesting boxes with the help of these partners.

Managed Hunts

Managed hunts for deer, turkey, waterfowl, and doves continue to be an effective way to reach new and seasoned hunters to provide unique hunting opportunities. Youth-only managed hunts and hunts for those with disabilities are well-attended and provide additional opportunities. In the 2014–2015 deer season and 2015 spring turkey season, 5,245 total hunters participated in managed hunts, including 468 youth hunters. Throughout the 2014–2015 waterfowl season, over 46,000 hunter trips were accommodated at the Department's 15 intensively managed wetland areas, including 2,833 youth hunter trips.

Association of Conservation Information Awards

The Department's publication and communication efforts won seven awards at the 2015 Association of Conservation Information Conference. Award categories include communications campaign, audio

program, education and outreach, posters, publications, photography, graphics, magazine, video, and television.

Citizen Input on White-tailed Deer

Deer Management Open Houses were conducted summer 2014 to gather public input regarding possible white-tailed deer regulation changes (season timing, bag limits, and archery methods). Five of the 14 open houses were conducted during fiscal year 2015, reaching 464 people. A virtual open house on the Department website also shared handouts and allowed citizens to provide input online. Over 2,000 comments were received.

Considering these comments, the Department proposed possible deer management regulations changes for the 2016–2017 deer season. Staff conducted eight additional open houses in spring 2015 to gather public input. Seven hundred and thirty six citizens attended these open houses, providing almost 1,300 comments. Over 6,000 comments were provided online. These comments are helping inform deer management decisions.

Additional public meetings were held with landowners in areas of the state affected by Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) in deer. In January 2015, an informational meeting regarding additional CWD-positive deer found in Adair County was held in Kirksville with 27 people attending. In April, the Department met with landowners in New Cambria and Kirksville to provide updates regarding CWD. Two Cole/Moniteau County CWD Landowner Meetings were held in Centertown in May with a total of 71 people attending.

Fishers and Farmers Partnership

Missouri is one of five Midwest states that participate in the Fishers and Farmers Partnership for the Upper Mississippi River Basin. The group is comprised of nongovernmental agricultural and conservation organizations and state and federal agencies working to add value to farms while restoring aquatic habitat on site and downstream on the Mississippi River. Cost-share funding and technical support comes from conservation partners.

This year Missouri participated in projects in the Penno Creek watershed, a tributary of the Salt River in northeast Missouri. Fourteen landowners enrolled in cover crop cost-share encompassing 660 acres. Other projects included alternative water-

ing/fencing and rotational grazing. These projects improve habitats while also improving agriculture production systems. The Missouri Department of Conservation has a long history of partnering with private landowners and the Fishers and Farmers Partnership is helping to bring more of these opportunities our way.

Fishing Workshops

Department staff provided opportunities statewide to learn about Missouri's diverse aquatic resources. These opportunities provide education about aquatic environments, fish identification, regulations, fishing methods, and best management practices to protect aquatic habitat. These events include:

- Frog gigging at Blind Pony Hatchery
- Fishing Clinics taught to Scouting groups, such as the Girl Scout Camp at Wappapello Lake
- Fishing Clinics taught to 4-H groups
- Big River Fishing Clinic
- Annual Kid's Fishing Clinics statewide
- Fishing clinics for the elderly
- Specialized fishing clinics for ice fishing, fly fishing, trout fishing, etc.

Fishing Events

Throughout the year MDC staff and sponsors provide numerous organized fishing opportunities to targeted audiences throughout the state. This past year, 341 fishing events were held with over 27,000 participants. Examples of these types of events include:

- Kid's Fishing Days at state hatcheries
- Fishing clinics throughout the state
- School fishing trips
- Ladies fishing events
- National Hunting and Fishing Day events
- Discover Nature Fishing events

Stream Team Program 25 Year Anniversary

Twenty-fourteen was a big year for the Missouri Stream Team Program. Staff and volunteers celebrated 25 years of caring for Missouri streams and the program surpassed 5,000 teams statewide. In fact, 58 of the nearly 100 teams formed in the first year, 1989, are still active to this day. Team 1, the Roubidoux Fly Fishers, held a commemorative cleanup where it all began 25 years before in Waynesville City Park, hauling over a ton of trash and 15 tires

out of Roubidoux Creek. In the 25-year span of the program, teams have reported over 20,000 tons of trash removed from streams, nearly 300,000 trees planted, and over 2.4 million hours dedicated to the betterment of Missouri streams. One such volunteer and current Stream Team Assistant for the St. Louis region, Brian Waldrop, received national recognition as a River Champion by American Rivers for his efforts with Arnold Stream Team 211. "The Mighty 211" is responsible for collecting more than 1,200 tons of the total reported by Stream Teams over the last 25 years, including tens of thousands of tires.

Communications Audit

The Department hired an independent, third-party company to conduct a comprehensive communication audit to determine how effectively the Department communicates to stakeholders, both internal and external, and to provide recommendations for optimizing communications across key stakeholder groups. Primary research for the audit included online surveys for the public, employees, and teachers; four focus groups across the state; and in-depth interviews with employees, commissioners, lawmakers, partner agencies, community organizations, and media representatives. Secondary research included reviewing existing communication channels, messages, and collateral material. The audit findings noted that the Department was very strong in its communication efforts with Missourians having a very good understanding of the overall message and mission of the Department. The audit also provided recommendations, organized in the final report by the respective stakeholder group, to enhance internal and external communications efforts in the future.

Social Media

Social media connects the Department with Missourians. The Department's Facebook page has more than 160,000 "likes" and reaches an average of 250,000 people per week who share our information with more than 50 million friends. Our Twitter feed has more than 7,300 followers who then pass our tweets along to thousands more. The Department's YouTube channels contain more than 1,300 videos and average about 100,000 views per month with more than 9.3 million total views. More than 100,000 Missourians also stay in touch with Department news, newsletters, events, or other areas of

interest through emails or texting sent directly to their phones. To follow the Department on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Google+, Flickr, Pinterest, or to sign up for email or texting updates, visit mdc.mo.gov.

Text Alert System

Outreach and Education has begun experimenting with text alerts for nature centers and interpretive sites. By texting a special code to GOV311 (468311), the public can subscribe to receive alerts on a specific location's upcoming events and offerings. Currently the public can text "MDC Runge" to receive alerts from Runge Nature Center staff. Over the next year, more locations will be given special codes and trained on the alert system so they can better reach the public in a timely manner.

The Cape Nature Center (CNC) was a pilot site, and leverages a different system. Until they are transitioned over, you can text "nature" to 91212 to receive information about events at CNC.

MDC Website Redesign/Upgrade

The hunting and fishing sections of the Department's website were completely retooled to provide a better user experience. Enhancements included in this phase of the redesign include:

- Species A–Z, a one-stop shop for all information on harvestable species.
- Seasons and permits display more extensive information.
- Regulations can be seen all together or by species.
- First certificates have been expanded to include more species and can now be completed online.

The nature section of the website is currently being built and is scheduled to be released at the end of 2015. This section will have a rebuilt field guide that allows for easier identification of Missouri species, and a places to go section that incorporates conservation area data and allows the public to search for conservation areas near them. Once this section is completed, the Department will be able to better promote the numerous conservation areas across the state and tie-in various field guide entries for species the public can see when visiting an area.

Outreach and Education Awards

The National Association of Interpretation (NAI) presented two awards to O&E staff in FY15. NAI is a

not-for-profit professional organization dedicated to advancing the profession of heritage interpretation. John Miller, Interpretive Center Manager at Shepard of the Hills Conservation Center, received the Fellow/Lifetime Achievement award. The award honors a member exemplifying career achievement in guiding the interpretive profession through instruction, mentoring, research, writing, frontline interpretation, and management and provides strong support to NAI.

The entire staff at Burr Oak Woods Conservation Nature Center was awarded the Thomas Say Outstanding Event Award for their event “Super Heroes and the Curse of the Alien Invaders”. The award is for a presentation or program that specifically includes nature in the theme and resource.

Discover Nature Schools

Discover Nature Schools helps teachers engage students in hands-on, outdoor, place-based learning. Discover Nature Schools units are available for 97 percent of Missouri school districts. Thus far, 326 schools taught the primary unit, 747 schools adopted the elementary habitats unit, 489 schools taught the middle-school aquatic unit, and 296 schools adopted the high school ecology unit. A pre-kindergarten unit has been developed and is being field tested. Home schools also use the Discover Nature units.

Along with student books, teacher guides, and science notebooks for each unit, the Department provides free training and grants for exploration equipment, outdoor classroom materials, and field experiences. Conservation grants supporting Discover Nature Schools totaled \$228,600.

Discover Nature — Families Hunting Skills Weekend

The first Discover Nature — Families Hunting Skills Weekend was held in March 2015. This new statewide annual event provided families the opportunity to learn basic skills related to hunting. Family members rotated together through the three workshops: Beginning Hunting; Introduction to Firearms (rifle and shotgun shooting); and Archery. Participants 11 years and older were required to have already completed a hunter education course or to complete the knowledge portion and attend the skills session provided on the Friday evening of the event. This provided a strong foundation for the weekend but especially for the Introduction to Firearms (rifle and

shotgun) and the Beginning Hunting workshops. Firearm safety was fresh in everyone's mind and reviewed and reinforced throughout all workshops.

Most families were new to hunting skills, but some were current hunters trying to engage their families in hunting and hunting-related skills. Participants were excited about learning new hunting skills, grateful for the opportunity to learn these skills with their families, and eager to follow through and do these activities with their families in the future.

The statewide Discover Nature — Family event is planned to be held over the National Hunting and Fishing Day weekend in September 2016.

Hunting and Fishing Opportunities

During the past fiscal year, we issued 6,070 hunting-method exemptions to help disabled hunters enjoy Missouri's outdoors. We also issued 434 group-fishing permits to help Missourians who otherwise might not be able to participate and learn about outdoor fishing activities.

Ecological Site Classification Developed to Help Land Owners and Managers

In order to help people understand nature better and to help them manage their land, Missouri partners are working to create an Ecological Sites online tool. Landowners can make maps using several websites to get information about their land. Was there prairie? Were there woods? What would be a good tree to plant in my yard? Ecological Sites also help people get money to restore their land for wildlife. Would this be a good place for turkey to live? How about deer? Do they have food and places to live? Knowing what grows naturally on the land can save time and money for landowners.

Agent Outreach Efforts

Conservation agents represented the Department at 5,771 meetings with civic groups, schools, church groups, and other organizations. Agents completed 7,008 radio and television programs, published 2,693 newspaper articles, and conducted 2,570 exhibits. As part of their community relations efforts, agents contacted more than 499,370 citizens and answered 157,019 phone calls.

In fiscal year 2015, conservation agents organized six Discover Nature Girls Camps throughout the state. These events generally are three-day, two-night summer camps where girls between the

ages of 11 and 15 are taught the hunter education program. In addition to becoming hunter-education certified, the girls are also taught outdoor skills such as archery, canoeing, fishing, tree-stand safety, and Dutch oven cooking. Since the program's inception in 2008, approximately 750 girls and chaperones have been hunter-education certified through the camps. The Department continues to expand this popular program.

Technical Assistance to Landowners

The Department provided timely and responsive service to landowners through 59,039 rural and urban contacts, including 6,777 on-site visits. Assistance was offered to landowners who wanted help with habitat management plans resulting in 2,651 habitat management plans being written during fiscal year 2015.

Wildlife Damage Program

The Wildlife Damage Program assists landowners who are experiencing wildlife conflicts on their property. Assistance is provided through phone calls, workshops, special events, and on-site visits. The Damage Program received 3,093 phone calls that resulted in 1,078 site visits. Assistance was provided for conflicts with feral hogs, raccoons, skunks, coyotes, groundhogs, otters, beavers, bats, Canada geese, and a variety of other species. In addition, Wildlife Damage Biologists conducted 55 workshops on trapping and damage prevention for 1,235 participants, and reached Missouri citizens by participation in 21 special events and via 29 media contacts.

Call Before You Cut

Call Before You Cut is a voluntary forest landowner information program. Landowners are urged to call a toll-free phone number or visit a website for information about the benefits of a professional forester. In fiscal year 2015, 575 landowners covering 48,922 acres requested information. Since 2009, 2,361 landowners who control more than 235,801 acres of forest have been sent information. In fiscal year 2015, a cooperative agreement was developed with the Missouri Consulting Foresters Association to conduct site visits for interested landowners with more than 40 acres. Consultants completed 69 visits on 7,761 acres in 42 counties.

Habitat Management Workshops

The Department held or participated in more than 500 habitat management workshops and field days for more than 35,700 private landowners. The workshops focused on management techniques to benefit early successional wildlife such as quail, rabbits, and grassland birds.

Private Lake and Stream Management

Fisheries staff responded to 4,997 requests for watershed, floodplain, riparian corridor, stream or lake management information and/or technical assistance. Five hundred and forty three on-site visits were made and 128 recommendations or management plans were written. On-site work included 139 fish population surveys, 14 renovations, and 33 fish kill investigations. Staff conducted 15 stream or lake management workshops for 373 people. Staff also coordinated or participated in 15 active watershed-management projects.

State Record Fish

State records for paddlefish and striped bass taken by pole and line were set in fiscal year 2015.

A new state record for blue catfish taken on a trot-line was also recorded.

The new state record for bigmouth buffalo taken by archery methods occurred during the fiscal year. Two new state records were also set for river carp sucker while bow fishing during the reporting time frame.

The department also awarded 238 anglers with Master Angler certificates during the fiscal year.

Trout Season Opening Day

Opening Day of the 2015 catch-and-keep trout season began on Sunday, March 1. The Show-Me State's four trout parks — Bennett Spring State Park near Lebanon, Montauk State Park near Licking, Roaring River State Park near Cassville, and Maramec Spring Park near St. James — stocked approximately 15,000 12.5-inch trout in anticipation of 11,000 anglers. Each park stocked three fish per anticipated angler with Bennett Spring, Montauk and Roaring River each expecting 3,000 anglers while Maramec anticipated 2,000 anglers.

A late winter storm kept many anglers away from the March 1st opener at the four trout parks. Attendance totaled 4,617 anglers despite the poor weather conditions. Those that ventured out were rewarded with excellent fishing.

Annually the Department stocks more than 800,000 trout at the state's four trout parks and approximately 1.5 million statewide. Trout anglers' spend more than \$100 million each year in the Show-Me State, which generates more than \$180 million in business activity, supports more than 2,300 jobs, and creates more than \$70 million dollars in wages. About 30 percent of Missouri trout anglers come from other states, so a substantial portion of trout fishing expenditures is "new money" for the state's economy.

Free Trees Promote Forest Awareness

The Missouri Department of Transportation and the Department entered into a new Cooperative Agreement to support the Trees for Tomorrow program, an effort designed to raise awareness of Missouri's forests and increase understanding of the benefits of trees. The agreement is renewable for up to 5 years and provides the Department \$75,000 annually for free tree distribution programs. In FY15, scout troops, Stream Teams, school groups, conservation groups, and communities received trees through this program for projects in both urban and rural areas. The agreement also provided support for the distribution of shortleaf pine and redbud seedlings to more than 90,000 fourth-grade students statewide. Nearly 300,000 free trees were provided through the Trees for Tomorrow program.

Outstanding Forest Stewards

The Department and the Missouri Community Forestry Council jointly sponsored the Missouri Arbor Awards of Excellence. This program recognizes those throughout the state who act as good stewards of tree resources. Award categories include municipalities/governments, organizations, individuals and businesses. In fiscal year 2015, awards went to Mercy Hospital in Joplin, Dr. Christine Garhart, Lincoln County government, and the Kirkwood Tree Commission. Award recipients were recognized at the Missouri Community Forestry Council's annual conference held in Jefferson City in March 2015.

Conservation Volunteers

Volunteers are important Department partners. Volunteer highlights in fiscal year 2014 include:

- **Hunter Education:** Volunteer instructors contributed more 13,000 hours delivering more than 1,080 hunter education classes in Missouri, certifying over 20,800 students.
- **Stream Teams:** Missouri had 4,088 active Stream Teams statewide in calendar year 2014. Four hundred and eleven members were trained to be volunteer water quality monitors. Volunteers donated 132,984 hours and their accomplishments included 981 water-quality monitoring trips, removing 496 tons of trash, planting 10,963 trees, and stenciling 872 storm drains.
- **Missouri Master Naturalist:** Through 12 community-based chapters, Master Naturalist volunteers donated more than 62,000 hours to conservation projects. Accomplishments included flora and fauna monitoring, tree planting, native seed collection, invasive species removal, trail construction, habitat restoration, and outreach and education. Volunteers collectively participated in more than 12,000 hours of advanced training, including a three-day advance training conference attended by 240 volunteers. Five initial training courses were conducted resulting in 144 new volunteers joining the program.
- **Facilities:** Volunteers at the Department's interpretive sites, nature centers, and staffed shooting ranges contributed in excess of 60,000 hours of service assisting staff with programs, visitor relations, and area maintenance.
- **Protection Volunteers:** Missouri has 126 protection volunteers who donated 6,989 hours this past year assisting conservation agents. Protection volunteers help with everything from hunter education classes, outdoor skills programs and wildlife surveys to radio programs, nuisance wildlife calls, and special enforcement patrols.
- **Missouri Forestkeepers Network:** The Missouri Forestkeepers Network is a volunteer group interested in forests and forest monitoring. More than 2,600 individuals, groups, and organizations were enrolled in the program in fiscal year 2015. Members planted more than 28,000 trees, documented the location of butternut trees, worked with outdoor classrooms and participated in youth-oriented activities, and spent over 5,500 hours on activities to improve forest health, such as treating unwanted vegetation. These activities benefit several Department programs. The Heritage Woods program is managed through the Missouri Forestkeepers Network and was promoted to people who own smaller parcels of land.
- **Discover Nature — Fishing:** Fishing is a great way for kids and families to have fun outdoors, discover nature, and make happy memories together. Department staff trained experienced anglers

from all around the state to help others learn to fish through its free Discover Nature — Fishing program. The statewide program provides a series of four separate lessons to help kids and families gain skills and confidence to go fishing on their own. Lessons include: Equipment, Casting, and Proper Fish Handling; How to Rig a Pole and Bait a Hook; Aquatic Biology, Ecology and Conservation; and Fishing with Lures. Each of the four, two-hour lessons is followed by hands-on fishing where participants put their newly learned skills to work. Equipment and bait is provided for participant use. Volunteers teach a single lesson or multiple lessons. Classes are offered throughout the year on a regional basis. In fiscal year 2015, 329 classes were held, which reached 5,726 individuals.

Forest Management for Landowners

The Department provided forest management on-site technical assistance to 1,767 landowners throughout the state, impacting 106,881 acres. Many of these on-site visits resulted in a written management plan. A total of 307 plans covering 29,112 acres were written. In addition, 55 private land timber sales were marked and 206 landowners were referred to a forest consultant.

Logger of the Year

The Department recognized Allen Brown and his sons Cody Brown and Dylan Brown of New London as Missouri's Logger of the Year for practicing sustainable forest management. Each year foresters nominate loggers that excel in their profession. The State Logger of the Year award is chosen by a panel representing the Department, the Missouri Consulting Foresters Association, the Missouri Loggers Council, and the Missouri Forest Products Association (MFPA). The logger must complete the MFPA and Department-sponsored Professional Timber Harvester's Training Program. Robert Neil from Winona and Nick Adams from Steelville were selected as regional recipients of the Logger of the Year award for 2015. To be considered for the award, loggers must meet the following criteria: a.) Must be practicing sustainable forest management, have good forest product utilization, and are implementing best management practices; b.) Must have low residual tree damage on their harvests; and c.) Must be practicing safe work habits and preferably using all the safety equipment.

Trees Work Campaign Launched

Forestry Division staff integrated the Trees Work theme into many communication efforts. Forestry field staff promoted the benefits trees provide at nearly 40 events in FY15. Efforts to increase awareness of the benefits trees and forests provide were recognized by the Arbor Day Foundation with the Public Awareness of Trees Award. A research project showed that public awareness of the benefits associated with trees rose 13 percent in the three communities where we have targeted messaging over the last three fiscal years. The targeted messaging continued with paid advertising on Pandora radio, broadcast radio, and various print media with a focus in Webster Groves, Columbia, and Salem, Missouri. The fourth Trees Work poster was completed with the phrase "Without trees we'd be up a creek without a paddle." The March issue of the *Missouri Conservationist* featured an article "Trees Work for Wildlife and People." Over 2,000 runners received Trees Work information at the Springfield Conservation Marathon, and 700 Trees Work post cards were provided to visitors at the State Fair.

Landowner-Led Conservation Habitat Cooperatives

The Department and non-government organizations continued development of over 40 wildlife and habitat cooperatives through workshops and educational meetings in fiscal year 2015. Several cooperatives that focus on quality deer management (there are other co-op focuses as well such as all-wildlife, woodland, quail, and prairie) are finalizing data from their trail camera surveys, while many more are preparing to gather observational and harvest data for the 2015–2016 hunting seasons.

Partner organizations like the National Wild Turkey Federation, Quality Deer Management Association, Quail and Upland Wildlife Federation, and Quail Forever assist in the development of some of these cooperatives in an effort to meet the varying interests of landowners. Any newly formed cooperative will be tasked with establishing goals and objectives to solidify the group and aid the members in task management.

Listened to Missourians

The Department believes that part of delivering excellent public service is to listen and understand what Missourians say about conservation programs

and services. We conduct a variety of scientifically sound, unbiased, and representative efforts each year to understand public opinions, expectations, and recreation participation. This information guides decisions about regulations and fish, forest, and wildlife management.

In fiscal year 2015 there were 129 activities that involved more than 75,000 people. These included surveys, open houses, comment periods, and contacts to the Regulations Committee. Examples of efforts included the 2014 Spring Tukey Hunter Survey (mailed to 13,000 Missourians), 13 deer management open houses, five chronic wasting disease public meetings, 74 area plan comment periods, and an unstaffed shooting range public use survey conducted on 39 Department shooting ranges. In addition, the AskMDC and *Missouri Conservationist* magazine staff received a wide variety of questions and comments throughout the year.

Engage Partners at all Levels

Missouri Accessible Outdoors

Missouri sportsmen and sportswomen with disabilities have better access to the great outdoors, thanks to donations of 11 all-terrain wheelchairs called Action TrackChairs (TrackChairs) to the Missouri Department of Conservation. The first nine TrackChair donations were made in honor of Bass Pro Shops founder Johnny Morris. The 10th TrackChair was donated by MidwayUSA, McDonald's, and the Chip McGeehan Family. The 11th TrackChair was donated by several groups in the Kansas City area. The funding was orchestrated by the Missouri Conservation Heritage Federation, which then donated the TrackChairs to the Missouri Department of Conservation. These TrackChairs will be utilized for disabled hunting, fishing, and other outdoor education events sponsored by the Missouri Department of Conservation and/or partnering organizations.

Dove Hunt Partnership

The Department partnered with the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTf) and Quail Forever (QF) to provide mentored hunts for first-time dove hunters 8 years and older on five sunflower fields located on private land across the state and one on public land. Participants were required to attend a hunter-orientation workshop where they learned about dove

biology and management, the importance of hunters and hunting, hunter safety, and had the opportunity to practice shooting a shotgun. Each hunting field was limited to 16–20 hunter/mentor pairs per hunt to maximize safety and provide a quality experience. This partnership is part of increased focus on hunter recruitment and retention.

Table Rock National Fish Habitat Initiative (NFHI) Project

Southwest Region Fisheries staff replenished 22 pine tree brush piles dating back to 2007 with cedar trees and built nine new cedar tree brush piles on Table Rock Lake. During the NFHI project evaluation, staff learned from SCUBA surveys that pine tree brush piles only last seven to eight years before deteriorating to sizes too small to be effective fish attractors. Using side imaging technology, staff determined which existing pine tree brush piles needed to be replenished in the Indian Point area of Table Rock Lake. Pine tree structures that were installed prior to 2007 were difficult to find even with side imaging and were removed from the GIS map.

Statewide Angler Survey

In 2014, we conducted a mail survey of Missouri 2013 fishing permit holders to collect information on angler effort, angling locations, angling methods used, and species fished for to address information needs related to operational resource management, stakeholder education, and planning and policy development. Based upon our survey data, an estimated 791,634 anglers (not including exempt anglers under 16 and over 65 years of age) fished in Missouri during 2013. The most fished water type was large reservoirs, followed by private lakes and ponds, public lakes, and rivers and streams. Across all water types in Missouri, the most fished for species was black (large-mouth) bass, followed by crappie and catfish. Anglers fished with a pole and line more than any other gear or method. The next most popular methods were trotlines and jug lines. The most fished large reservoir was Lake of the Ozarks. The most fished public lakes were those on the August A. Busch Wildlife Area and the most fished of Missouri's rivers and streams was the Missouri River.

Volunteers Given Chance to Help Save Endangered Pallid Sturgeon

As part of the Department's efforts to restore pallid sturgeon, a broodstock collection effort has been annually organized during the months of March and April on the Missouri River. This effort is usually a collaboration among Department personnel, universities, and other federal partners. However in 2015, for the first time this effort was opened up to the public for volunteers to participate. The effort was held near St. Joseph and attracted volunteers from as far away as Springfield. In total, 78 volunteers from the public ran over 14,000 trotline hooks in a three-week period to help collect 95 pallid sturgeon of which 16 met the criteria to send to Blind Pony State Fish Hatchery to be assessed for spawning. This was a great opportunity for interested folks to provide hands-on assistance in restoring an endangered species while experiencing a unique time on the river.

Timber Price Trends Report

In cooperation with the Missouri Consulting Foresters Association, the Department continued to conduct quarterly surveys of timber prices throughout the state. Foresters voluntarily submit sale reports on both public and private land timber sales. The Department uses these reports to compile region-wide timber price trends, which are available to landowners, loggers, and other members of the forest products industry and the general public. These free publications help landowners when planning sales and preparing tax returns. In fiscal year 2015, the Department received more than 107 reports from 34 foresters.

Approximately 100 citizens receive a hard copy of the quarterly market report while more than 3,300 recipients receive it electronically. The report is also available on the Department's website.

Forest and Woodland Association of Missouri

The Department partnered with the Forest and Woodland Association of Missouri (FWAM) to reach Missourians with the message that trees are important to our daily lives. In fiscal year 2015, FWAM assisted with the annual American Tree Farm Conference where attendees toured the farm of Bob and Barb Kipfer, the 2014 Missouri Tree Farmers of the Year. FWAM members hosted displays at the St.

Louis Earth Day Festival. In April, FWAM organized the Urban Wood and Utilization Workshop in Gray Summit. The workshop focused on the use of urban trees for wood products when removal is necessary. FWAM partnered with the Department to host this workshop. About 35 people attended.

Shoal Creek Woodlands for Wildlife

The Shoal Creek Woodlands for Wildlife project is a landscape-scale effort targeting approximately 63,000 acres in Crawford County, of which 83 percent is forested. A U.S. Forest Service grant was secured to advance this Advisory Committee's vision. Grant funding was used to implement 13 projects on 136 acres to improve forest health and water quality. Outreach was conducted to 69 landowners through field days and on-site assistance. Practices include a reinforced stream crossing, stream bank stabilization, livestock exclusion from woods and streams, and controlled burns. There were 19 plans developed covering 445 acres.

Master Logger Certification

The Department continues to support Missouri Master Logger Certification. To participate, loggers agree to uphold the standards set by the program. The Department awarded a \$50,000 grant to the Missouri Forest Products Association to aid the program. Loggers can be removed if they do not uphold the standards of the program. The eight-member certifying board is composed of a state legislator, a wildlife professional, a Master Logger from another state, a soil scientist, a representative from an environmental organization, a private landowner, a forest industry representative, and the Department.

This program gives an outstanding logger an opportunity to be recognized and their skills showcased. It is hoped that when landowners seek to harvest timber they will use a Missouri Master Logger. The state's fish, forest, wildlife, soils, water, and air are better protected when harvesting is done by a certified logger. In fiscal year 2015, three new applicants were approved by the certifying board and one was removed from the program. Two Master Loggers were recertified bring the total to 14 certified Master Loggers in the state.

Urban Lumber Grant

The Department entered into a cooperative agreement with the Glacierland RC&D Council, INC., in

Wisconsin, to assist with a multistate grant to promote the utilization of dead and declining urban trees. The Department will receive \$45,000 reimbursement for efforts in this project. Urban trees have their highest value while living. However, trees removed for forest health and other causes should be utilized to their highest and best use to maximize economic, environmental, and societal benefits for urban communities, their residents and their visitors. Too often, these trees end up in landfills or simply chipped for mulch. The focus of the urban wood initiative is to develop higher end value-added uses for these urban trees. In FY15, the Department and partners held an urban wood workshop in the St. Louis area and have held tours at the Kansas City-based Urban Lumber Company.

County Aid Road Trust

The County Aid Road Trust program enables the Department to cost share maintenance of roads accessing Department areas with 54 counties and other local governments statewide. The program provided about \$530,000 for placing 79,908 tons of rock on 446 miles of public roads leading to conservation areas statewide last fiscal year.

Utility Providers Recognized

In partnership with the national Arbor Day Foundation, the Department recognized 11 utility providers as TreeLine USA companies (Ameren, Boone Electric Cooperative, Carthage Water & Eclectic Plant, City of Independence Power & Light, City Utility of Springfield, Columbia Water & Light, Crawford Electric Cooperative, Cuivre River Electric Cooperative, Empire District Electric, Kansas City Power & Light, Ralls County Electric Cooperative). Utility providers must meet these five standards to receive certification: 1) Provide quality tree care, 2) Train workers annually, 3) Community tree planting and public education, 4) Tree-based energy conservation programs, and 5) Observe Arbor Day.

Monitoring Forest Health

The Forest Health Program is an effort among the Department and other state and federal agencies to monitor and evaluate forest health and provide information to Missourians. Primary threats to forest health in Missouri are oak decline, oak wilt, sporadic insect outbreaks, weather disturbances, and

introductions of invasive species, such as emerald ash borer.

Forest health staff also provide diagnostic services on all forms of forest insect and disease agents. Forest and pest management recommendations are provided to private landowners, forest managers, arborists, and the green industry. In fiscal year 2015, staff responded to 3,196 requests for assistance with forest health issues. Citizens are also encouraged to report suspected invasive pest infestations through a toll-free phone number, website, or an email. Forest health staff investigate these reports.

Forest health staff further cooperated with state and federal partners in 2015 to finalize the Missouri Invasive Forest Pest Plan, which outlines combined state and federal responses to invasive forest insects and diseases in Missouri.

- **Gypsy Moth:** The Department and cooperating state and federal agencies completed the annual gypsy moth trapping survey in August 2014 with four moths captured statewide. The Department monitored over 3,400 traps in St. Louis, Ozark, and Southeast regions and provided GIS and data management services for all agencies participating in the survey. Missouri has no known reproducing gypsy moth populations.

- **Thousand Cankers Disease of Black Walnut:** The Department continued monitoring and outreach efforts for thousand cankers disease (TCD) of black walnut supported by two grants from U.S. Forest Service State and Private Forestry. In 2015, staff provided outreach efforts including an Internet ad campaign and magazine ads. Staff conducted 126 visual surveys for TCD and placed 76 traps at high-risk locations for the insect that spreads the disease. Thirty-two walnut samples were evaluated in the lab. No TCD was detected.

Department staff worked with the Missouri Department of Agriculture to complete a draft of the TCD Action Plan for public comment.

The Department provided funding for University of Missouri research to evaluate black walnut germplasm for possible resistance to TCD.

- **Emerald Ash Borer:** Populations of the emerald ash borer (EAB) had been detected in 12 Missouri counties and the City of St. Louis by June 2015. EAB populations are also known to be present in the Kansas City area (Clay, Jackson, and Platte counties), south central Missouri (Pulaski County), and southeastern Missouri (Butler, Bollinger, Madison, Perry, Reynolds, Oregon, and

Wayne counties). Within the St. Louis area, EAB is present in the City of St. Louis and in St. Charles County. The annual EAB trapping survey was conducted by the Missouri Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) in summer 2014. The Department continued serving as a gateway for Missourians to report suspected invasive forest pest infestations through phone and Web-based reporting systems.

- **Rapid White Oak Mortality:** Significant rapid white oak mortality (RWOM) has been reported in Central, Ozark, Southeast, and St. Louis regions. A grant from the U.S. Forest Service National Evaluation Monitoring Program to study the problem was awarded to the University of Missouri with match funding from the Department in FY14 and research work carried over into FY15. In fiscal year 2015, the Forest Health Program staff and other employees assisted with the research effort by providing information, advice, ground surveys of decline and mortality, and the Department lodging facilities for researchers while doing field work. This research indicated the mortality disproportionately affects white oak on better quality sites for tree growth and suggested several factors working together to cause the mortality. In addition to accumulated tree stress from weather events, an exotic root rotting pathogen, *Phytophthora cinnamomi*, and wood boring beetle native to the southeastern U.S., *Xyleborinus gracilis*, were detected at sampled locations. Additional research by the University of Missouri in FY16 will be partially funded by the Department. Research goals include determining the relative importance of causal factors to better predict when and where white oak stands will be affected and improve our ability to manage affected areas.

Fire-Suppression Training

The Department supports volunteer fire departments in many ways. One way is by providing annual wildland fire-suppression training to fire departments throughout the state. We conducted 12 sessions and trained more than 301 local firefighters in fire behavior, suppression techniques, and safety at no cost to the fire departments or the volunteers. In addition, we also provide instructors and logistical support for the Midwest Wildfire Training Academy held in Jefferson City each year. This academy draws thousands of participants from throughout the state and the Midwest.

Volunteer Fire Departments

The Department, in cooperation with the U. S. Forest Service, provided \$393,547 in grants to 189 volunteer fire departments. Rural fire departments provide the first line of defense against wildfire. Those serving populations smaller than 10,000 people can participate. These grants help fund protective clothing, equipment, and training.

Equipment was also provided to fire departments through two federal programs. In FY15, Excess Property Program provided 22 vehicles for conversion to response vehicles and \$652,074 of smaller equipment supplies. Coordination of these programs is managed by the Department's Rural Forest Fire Equipment Center located in Lebanon. The Department's volunteer fire department assistance program has assigned more than \$80 million in total value of equipment to volunteer fire departments since its inception in 1951.

Interstate Wildlife Violator Compact

Missouri participates in the Interstate Wildlife Violator Compact. The compact — 44 state wildlife agencies — agrees to reciprocally honor revocations/suspensions of hunting, fishing, and trapping privileges for wildlife related violations.

During fiscal year 2015, 2,535 people from other states had their privileges revoked in Missouri through the compact. The Missouri Conservation Commission revoked an additional 97 and submitted them to the compact. Participation in the compact also benefits Missourians who travel to other member states for hunting and fishing activities. If found in violation, they may be given the opportunity to resolve the citation by mail rather than being required to post a bond before leaving the member state. They are subject to revocation by all states in the compact, if the citation is ignored.

Share the Harvest

Conservation agents coordinate and support the Share the Harvest program with the Conservation Federation of Missouri, local charitable organizations, and local meat processors. In 2014, approximately 3,967 hunters donated 213,443 pounds of venison to less-fortunate Missourians. Since the start of the program, more than 3 million pounds of deer meat have been donated to Missouri citizens. Hunters who donate an entire deer may receive a \$60 reduction in the processing price from the Con-

servation Federation of Missouri. In some cases, local organizations provide additional funds for processing so there is no cost to hunters who donate deer. Hunters also may donate part of their deer to the Share the Harvest program.

Operation Game Thief/Forest Arson

Operation Game Thief/Forest Arson continues to help catch wildlife poachers and forest arsonists. The programs allow anonymous callers to report violations, and callers are eligible for rewards if arrests are made from their calls. Last year, Operation Game Thief (OGT) led to 269 arrests from 822 telephone calls. Conservation agents investigate each violation reported. In calendar year 2014, \$10,150 in reward money was paid to callers.

Timber Harvester Training

The Department works with Missouri's forest products industry to monitor the use of our state's forest resources. The Missouri Forest Products Association and the Department sponsor the Professional Timber Harvester (PTH) program. PTH is a logger training course about forest management principles that introduces new techniques and concepts, and strives to enhance safety. Eleven workshops were held across the state training 190 loggers in fiscal year 2015. There are a total of 508 loggers in the state who have attended this training and are current on their continuing education requirements.

Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Meeting

The Department of Conservation was the host for the 2014 annual meeting of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. The meeting was held in St. Louis on September 21–25, 2014. The conference theme was "Making Conservation Relevant in Today's Society." The association was founded in 1902 and is the organization that serves as the collective voice of North America's fish and wildlife agencies. The association supports and advocates for state, provincial, and territorial authority for fish and wildlife conservation and assists agencies in promoting science-informed resource management in collaboration with public and private partners. The Missouri Host Team and Department staff received many compliments about the success of the meeting. The meeting was an opportunity to showcase Missouri's world-class fish, forests, and wildlife and

the world-class partnerships and citizen support of conservation in Missouri.

Community Fisheries Assistance

Through the Community Assistance Program and closely related Corporate and Agency Partnership Program, the Department enters into agreements (usually 25 a year) with cities, counties, state and federal agencies, businesses, foundations, schools, and colleges. Under these agreements, the Department provides fisheries management at existing lakes and ponds and cooperatively develops and maintains facilities for anglers and boaters at lake and stream areas. Currently, there are agreements with 117 partners for the cooperative management of 166 public lakes, 43 stream access area, four lake access areas, 10 aquatic education ponds, and 15 lake access facilities.

New agreements were made with the cities of Unionville (Lake Mahoney), Bethany (North Bethany Reservoir and Old Bethany City Lake), Canton (Canton Ferry Access), Fayette (D.C. Rogers Lake and Peters Lake), Holden (Holden City Lake), Lawson (Lawson City Lake), and Macon (Macon City Lake and Brees Lake).

An amendment to the agreement with the city of Higginsville was made in order to develop and improve fishing access to the Higginsville City Lake.

Firewise Communities

Within the Fire Protection Districts of Redings Mill, Carthage, Lake Ozark, Southwest Camden County, and Pontiac, 24 communities were recognized nationally as Firewise Communities USA in fiscal year 2015. To qualify as a Firewise Communities USA, a community must meet these four standards: 1) Complete a community assessment and create a plan, 2) Form a Firewise Board, 3) Hold a Firewise Day event, and 4) Invest a minimum of \$2 per capita on local wildfire mitigation projects. Firewise Communities USA is a National Fire Protection Association program co-sponsored by the U. S. Forest Service, the U. S. Department of Interior, and the National Association of State Foresters. Their goal is to promote community use of technologies, policies, and practices that minimize the loss of life and property to wildfire, independent of firefighting efforts.

Community Tree Care

The Tree Resource Improvement and Maintenance (TRIM) cost-share program continues to receive interest from communities of all sizes across the state. In FY15, we funded 48 projects. The Department spent nearly \$500,000 on the projects and applicants matched Department contributions with \$364,044. These funds were used primarily to complete tree inventory projects, plant trees, educate Missourians about trees and their benefits, and complete tree pruning and removal.

Unstaffed Shooting Range Survey Initiated

Working with 4H and the University of Missouri, the Missouri Department of Conservation has completed the first half of a yearlong visitor survey at 39 unstaffed shooting ranges managed by the Department. 4H Survey Clerks have interviewed over 5,000 visitors using the ranges and asked them where they're from, how long they spend at the range and what sort of shooting they do. So far clerks have found that visitors travel an average of over 20 miles to get to the range and stay for a little over an hour. Rifle and handgun shooting is the most popular, and few visitors, less than 20 percent, have ever seen unsafe behavior at the range.

Visitors also have the opportunity to comment on how the ranges are managed, what changes they would like to see, and other Department policies. Many comments are very positive and some of the most frequent requests are for longer shooting lanes, 200 yards or more, and for short, pistol lanes. Once completed the Missouri Department of Conservation will use this public input to help make the ranges even better places for a safe and fun day's shooting.

Archery in the Schools

Missouri National Archery in the Schools (MoNASP) is coordinated through the Missouri Department of Conservation and the Conservation Federation of Missouri in partnership with 520 participating schools and numerous supporting organizations throughout the state. MoNASP is an affiliate of the National Archery in the Schools Program and promotes education, self-esteem, and physical activity through the sport of archery to more than 140,000 Missouri students.

The seventh annual MoNASP state tournament, held March 2015, drew more than 1,380 student archers in grades 4–12, and qualified 750 archers for the national tournament in Louisville, Kentucky.

MO National Archery in the Schools (MoNASP) – Movie Ad

Last fall the Department had a 30-second ad spot featuring MoNASP that played in the previews before the movie *Hunger Games: Mockingjay Part I*. The Emmy-nominated ad features a Missouri archery champion explaining how important archery is for her. The target audience for the movie placement was families and students 10–17 years of age, perfect for reaching our MoNASP demographic. Also, the geographic placement of the ad spots hit portions of the state where participation numbers and the knowledge of MoNASP is lower.

On-Line Applications for Bowhunter Cooperators

The Department, in conjunction with University of Missouri student programming interns, is creating an application for the Bowhunter Observation Survey. The survey asks volunteer bowhunters to record all the wildlife they see while out in their stands. This survey gives the Department an index of population trends of many species that are very hard to survey any other way, such as small game and furbearers. Currently this survey is entered by hand by data entry staff. However, once the application is launched, cooperating hunters will be able to enter their sightings immediately using a computer or smartphone. This will be more efficient for both the Department and survey participants. Cooperators who take advantage of this new technology will be able to review and analyze their own data, which was not available using the old paper system.

Partnerships

Department staff fostered over 50 partnerships with state, federal, and non-government organizations leveraging over \$1.5 million in partner agreements. These relationships enhanced technical, financial, and equipment support to landowners and communities with an interest in improving fish and wildlife habitat, as well as promoting healthy forests and waters.

University Research Farms Partnership

University of Missouri Bradford Research and Extension Center:

- The Department continues to partner with Bradford Farm Research and Extension Center with the addition of a Natural Resources Manager cooperative position that coordinates habitat demonstrations, events, and research on integration of fish, forest, and wildlife conservation with agricultural practices; the annual Quail and Pollinator Field Day, pollinator and echo-type seed research utilizing native plants are highlights.

University of Missouri Forage Systems Research Center

- The Department collaborated to develop a 319 mini grant proposal for a stream protection and riparian habitat improvement project as well as three native grass paddocks. The Department supplied the trees for the riparian corridor, which were planted by a contractor. MU staff then constructed all the livestock exclusion fencing for the three riparian corridors. Three fescue paddocks have been sprayed twice this growing season and will be seeded to a mixture of native grass and wildflowers (provided by the Department) next spring. A 1-acre pollinator/monarch plot is planned to be established next spring as well within the livestock exclusion area.

University of Missouri Graves-Chapple Research Center:

- The Department continues to partner with the loess hills prairie restoration demonstration project at the Center. Woody cover control, along with prairie and woodland restoration, continued on two adjacent private landowners' loess hills, including a prescribed burn coordinated by the USFWS.

University of Missouri Southwest Research Center:

- The Department continues our long-standing partnership at the Center whereby a host of demonstrations that integrate fish, forest, and wildlife conservation with traditional Southwest Missouri farm management practices are showcased. Wildlife-friendly grassland management, windbreaks, and wetland demonstrations are profiled.

Missouri State University's Journagan Ranch:

- The partnership with Missouri State University's (MSU) Journagan Ranch continued to expand during FY15. MSU and the Department outlined demonstration areas for educational purposes. These areas include a glade/woodland restoration project, livestock exclusion, an alternative watering system, effects of prescribed fire, and native grass plantings for use in grazing systems. In addition, a comprehensive grassland management plan was developed and 30 acres of native grasses were planted.

Agriculture Partnerships and Conferences

A 37-member agriculture cadre, made up of Department staff from across the state who are involved in key agriculture groups, helps provide correct information locally to our agriculture partners. This group also serves as an ear to the ground to pick up issues as they arise and identify areas of concern.

To connect with key Missouri agriculture partners, leaders, and businesses, the Department staffed information booths at all major agriculture conferences and trade shows held in the state, including Missouri Farm Bureau Annual Conference, Governor's Conference on Agriculture, Agriculture Business Council of Kansas City, Soil and Water Conservation Districts Annual Training Conference, Missouri State Fair, Missouri Pork Association Annual Conference, MO-AG Annual Conference, and the Missouri Cattlemen's Association Convention.

Annual sponsorship of Agriculture Leaders Of Tomorrow helps maintain a clear understanding of the Department's mission and create a stronger network for the future.

Conservation articles are routinely provided to agriculture partners to be used in their magazines and pamphlets.

Additional efforts this year include making connections with the St Louis Agribusiness Club and assisting that group with a congressional tour on agriculture, which highlighted the diversity of Missouri agriculture and showcased the importance of our river systems to the regions' agricultural producers. The Department is working towards a partnership with MFA, Inc. to provide information racks where Department literature on management recommendations related to deer, quail, aquatic

nuisance plants, small game, and establishing food plots properly. The Department also hosted our first ever AG CAFÉ (Conservation Agriculture and Farmer Engagement) meeting in which we invited all the major agricultural partners to discuss important issues with Department leadership. The first Ag CAFÉ meeting was a great success and the agency plans to host more meetings in the future.

Community Tree Care Recognized

In partnership with the National Arbor Day Foundation and National Association of State Foresters, the Department recognized 85 municipalities as Tree City USA communities. To receive Tree City USA certification, communities must meet these four standards: 1) Have a tree board or forestry department, 2) Adopt an ordinance that outlines how trees on public property will be cared for, 3) Spend a minimum of \$2 per capita on tree management, and 4) Celebrate Arbor Day. Most communities exceeded these requirements with an average of \$6.90 per capita spent on tree care in calendar year 2014. More than 43 percent of Missourians live in a Tree City USA community. Communities participating in this program range in size from Kansas City (population 441,545) to Augusta (population 225). Twelve communities initiated or significantly improved existing tree programs, earning a Tree City USA Growth Award. Resource and urban foresters provide these communities with technical assistance and distribute the recognition materials at Arbor Day events, City Council meetings, or similar public events to provide recognition of Department assistance and raise awareness in the community.

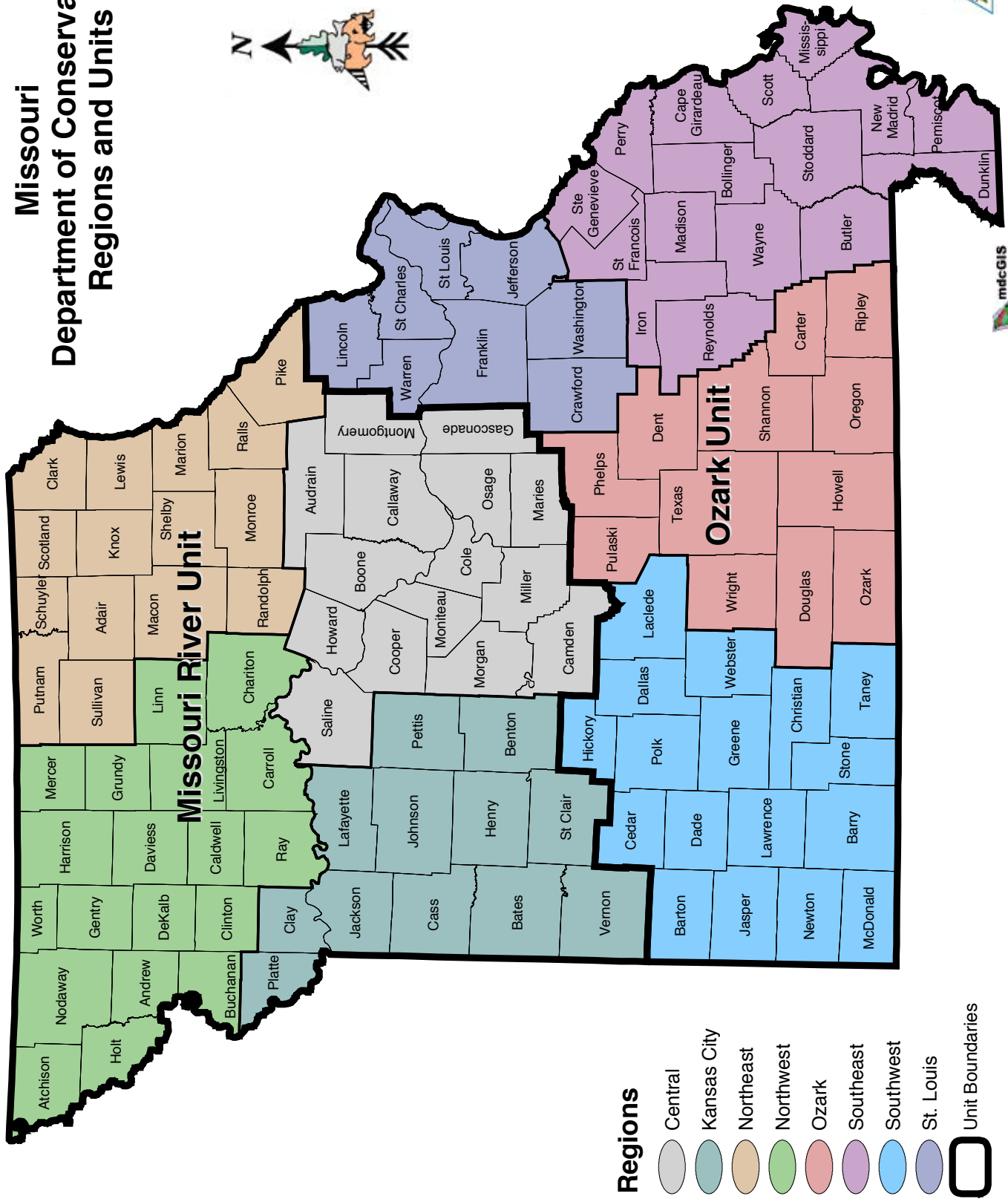
Tree Campus USA

The Department certified seven Tree Campus USA colleges in FY15. Drury University and Northwest Missouri State University joined Truman State University, Hannibal-LaGrange University, St. Louis University, St. Charles Community College, and William Woods University in meeting the Arbor Day Foundation's five standards for certification. Those standards are: 1) Tree Advisory Committee, 2) Tree care plan, 3) Tree program with dedicated annual expenditures, 4) Observe Arbor Day, and 5) Complete a service learning project that engages the students in tree management. The five campuses spent \$219,697 on tree care where a total of 27,855 students are enrolled.

Organization and Administrative Descriptions

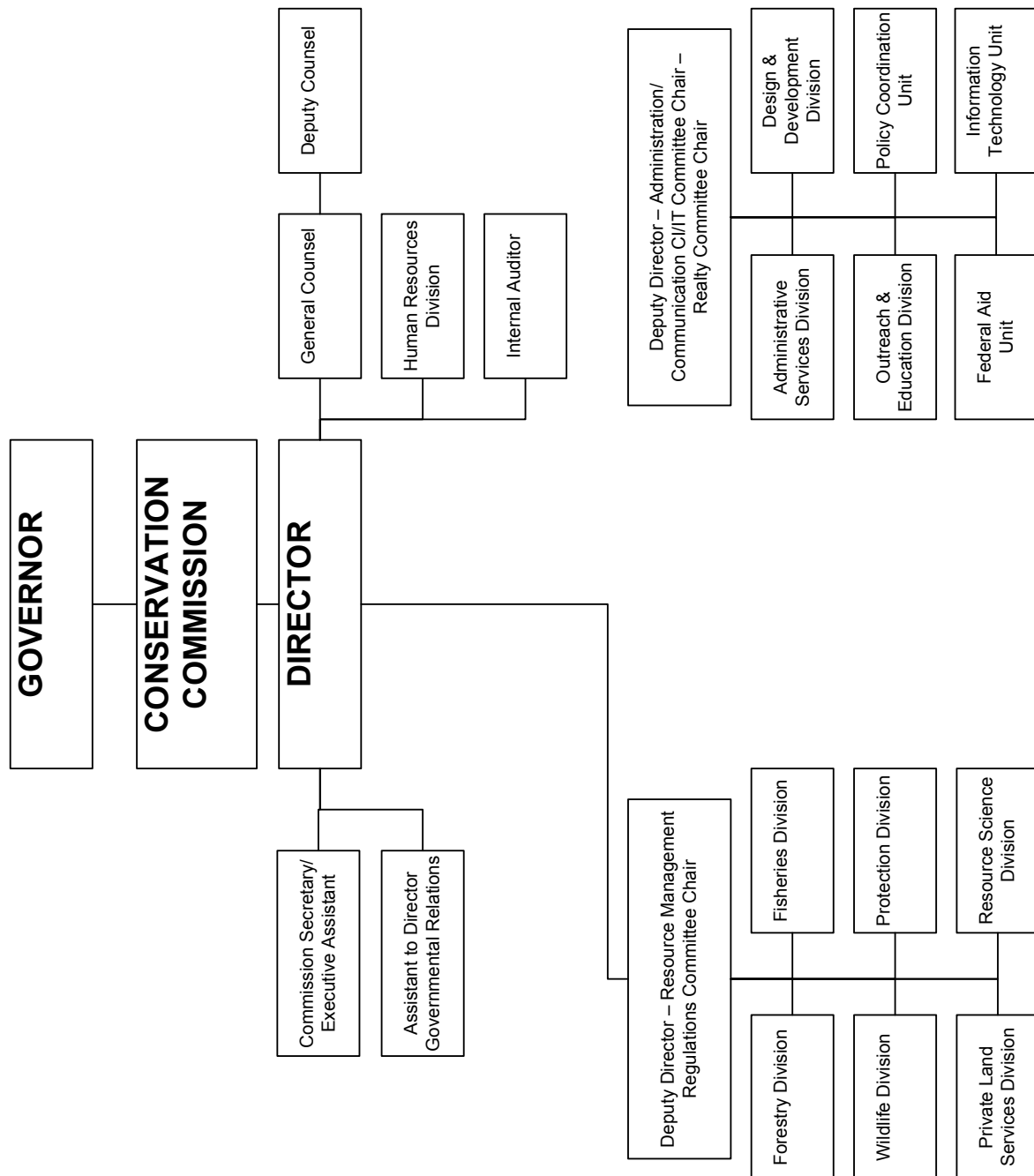
- ▲ Department Regions and Units
- ▲ Department Organizational Chart
- ▲ Director's Office and Department Divisions

Missouri Department of Conservation Regions and Units

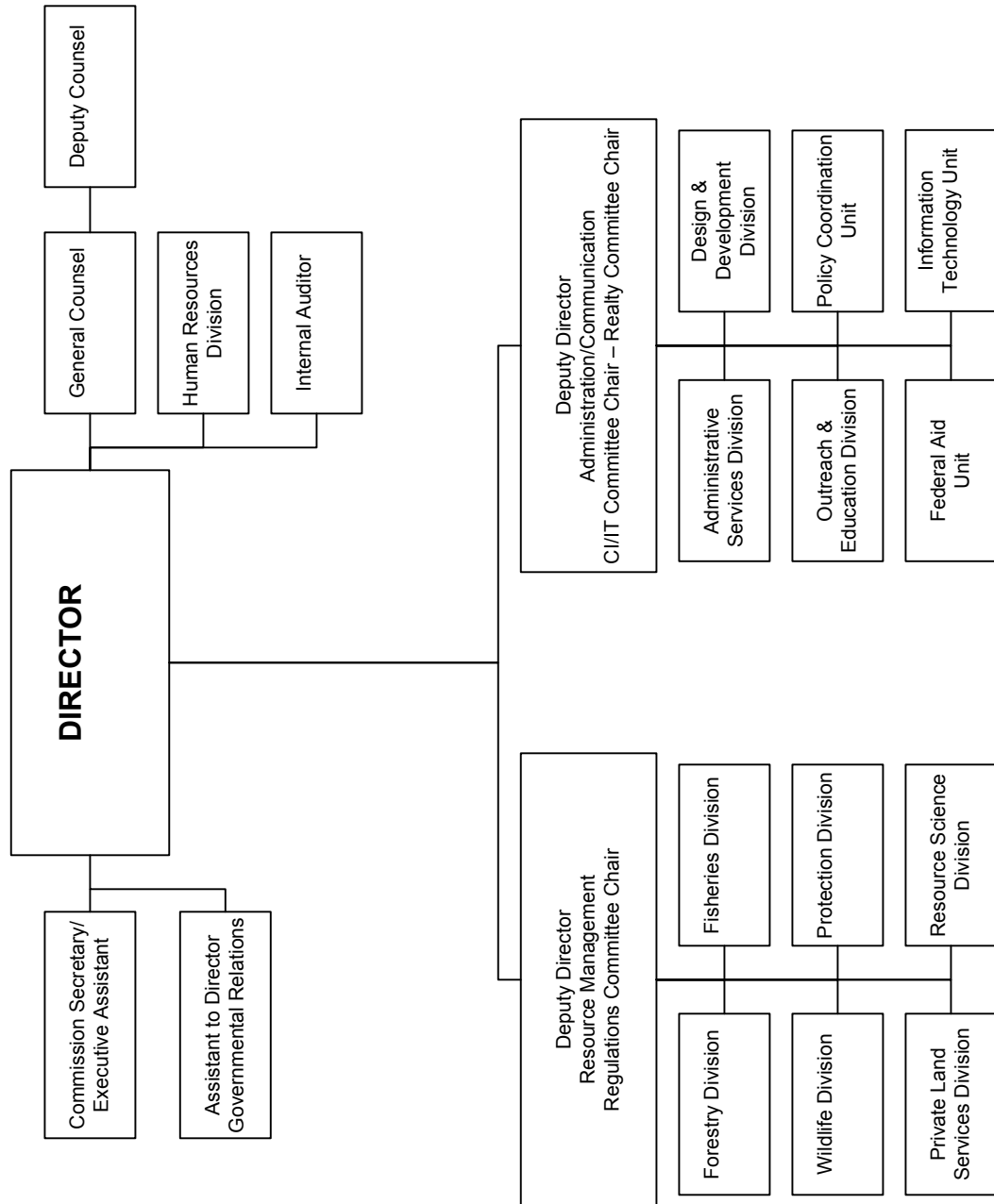


Cartography by: Kevin Borisenko, January 2003 | N:MAPSRegionUnitsNoShade.pdf

MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION



Director's Office



Director's Office

Robert L. Ziehmer, Director

Director Ziehmer, appointed by the Conservation Commission, directs all programs and activities of the Department of Conservation and directly oversees two deputy directors, an assistant to the director, the general counsel, an internal auditor, and the Human Resources Division chief.

Tom Draper, Deputy Director for Resource Management

Deputy Director Tom Draper is responsible for the divisions of Fisheries, Forestry, Wildlife, Private Land Services, Protection, and Resource Science. He also chairs the Regulations Committee, a standing committee that recommends statewide regulations for the *Wildlife Code of Missouri* to the Conservation Commission.

Tim Ripperger, Deputy Director for Administration/Communication

Deputy Director Tim Ripperger is responsible for the Administrative Services Division, Design and Development Division, Outreach and Education Division, the Policy Coordination Unit, and the Federal Aid Unit. He chairs the Capital Improvements and Information Technology Committee and the Realty Committee.

Aaron Jeffries, Assistant to Director

The assistant to director is responsible for governmental liaison with the state legislature, other elected officials, state agencies in the executive branch, and the governor's office staff. He also represents the director on the Land Reclamation Commission.

Jennifer Frazier, General Counsel

The general counsel is legal advisor for the Conservation Commission, the director, and department staff. She oversees the deputy counsel, who manages Realty Services and the Grants and Donations program.

Lisa Wehmeyer, Internal Auditor

The internal auditor provides independent audit of Department operations, policies, procedures, records and compliance with laws and regulations to ensure effectiveness and accountability. She also serves as the Custodian of Records and Hearing Officer.

Policy Coordination Unit

The Policy Coordination Unit serves the director's office and Department staff by managing department, statewide, and interagency issues. Examples of coordination include:

- Coordinating environmental and resource management policy issues;
- Representing public fish, forest, and wildlife interests by coordinating and providing comments and recommendations to federal and other agencies authorized to conduct environmental reviews;
- Coordinating intra- and inter-state fish, forest, and wildlife resources associated with the Mississippi, Missouri, and White river basins;
- Coordinating multi-agency resource issues;
- Administering and coordinating department resource policies, procedures, and strategic planning;
- Coordinating public involvement activities and applying human dimensions of conservation information to Department issues, including social and economic facts, analyses, and citizen input opportunities.

Information Technology Unit:

Better known as IT, this unit provides a wide range of statewide services, including data, telecommunications and radio system management, help desk operations, network operations, software support, mobile device support, IT field support, and application development maintenance and support. In addition to these services, this unit is responsible for planning and implementing numerous strategic projects each

year to improve agency operations and decision-making capabilities. These projects vary in size, complexity and duration, and cover the breadth of information technology, ranging from projects to replace aging IT equipment, to mobile application development, to implementing major agency systems, such as those used for Hatcheries Information Management, Financial & Budgeting Management, Human Resources Management, GIS Data Management, Infrastructure Asset Management and numerous others.

Federal Aid

Federal Aid staff administers the Department's federal assistance program and ensures compliance with federal rules and regulations. Besides the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration funding from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the Department receives additional federal funds from other USFWS programs, the U.S. Forest Service, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Natural Resource Conservation Service. The Department's Federal Aid staff annually administers approximately 115 grants, cooperative agreements, and contracts with federal agencies.

Realty Services

Realty Services is responsible for handling the acquisition of land and land rights for the Department; resolving boundary, encroachment, trespass, or access issues; handling easement requests; maintaining records of real estate inventory and distributing annual in-lieu tax payments to Missouri counties.

Regulations Committee

Who the Committee is:

The Missouri Conservation Commission is provided authority to make changes to regulations contained in the *Wildlife Code of Missouri*. The Regulations Committee is appointed by the Director and is responsible for all rules in the *Wildlife Code*. Members include Division chiefs from Fisheries, Forestry, Wildlife, Protection, Resource Science, and Private Land Services divisions. The Department's General Counsel serves in an advisory role and the committee is chaired by the Deputy Director — Resource Management.

What the Committee is:

The Regulations Committee makes recommendations to the Director and the Conservation Commission about modifying the regulations in the *Wildlife Code*. Those recommendations are based on information gathered from Missourians who have suggestions or concerns about wildlife management or regulations, hunting and fishing surveys, opinion polls, and public meetings across the state. The committee then seeks the expert opinion of the Department's research biologists and managers. Based on this information, the committee makes its recommendations to the Director.

Major Challenges:

- Balancing the Department's responsibility to manage and protect Missouri's resources with needs and desires of partners and citizens
- Finding effective methods to manage wildlife disease in the state
- Limiting the spread of invasive species in the state

How it meets the Commission's responsibility:

The Conservation Commission has constitutional responsibility to protect and manage Missouri's fish, forest, and wildlife resources for the citizens of the state now and for the future. Regulations are established to best manage Missouri's valuable plant and animal communities, to provide equal opportunity for Missourians to share and enjoy these resources, and to promote public safety. Three factors — biological impact, social concerns, and enforceability — come into play as a regulation develops.

Summary of significant regulation changes during 2014–2015:

- Allowed any resident of Missouri with a developmental disability who is at least sixteen (16) years of age to purchase any firearms hunting permit without having to take and fail the Hunter Education certification tests.
- Allowed all permits to be carried in electronic format and exempts permits carried in an electronic format from the permittee signature requirement.
- Removed reference to a concealed carry endorsement on a driver license or non-driver license in order to be consistent with the recent change in the law.
- Set regulations to curb the spread of chronic wasting disease in the state.
- Established season dates and limits for the 2015–2016 deer, turkey, and waterfowl seasons.
- Established 2016–2017 fall deer and turkey season structure, methods, and limits based on the Department's White-tailed Deer Management Plan.

Capital Improvements and Information Technology Committee

Who the Committee is:

The committee is chaired by the Deputy Director — Administration and voting members include all 10 Division Chiefs in the Department. Staff support for the committee includes the federal aid coordinator, all division's support staff, and Policy Coordination.

What the Committee is:

The Department of Conservation's Capital Improvements and Information Technology Committee, (CI/IT) has the responsibility of and makes recommendations on developing annual budgets for capital improvements and technology expenditures. The CI/IT Committee makes recommendations on construction projects in all phases of Department responsibility. In addition, the committee ensures strategic analysis and long-term planning of the Department's capital improvements and technology requirements for the future.

Major Challenges:

- Balancing the Department's responsibility to manage and protect Missouri's natural resources with the needs and desires of Missouri's citizens in conjunction with the necessary infrastructure to support enjoying public lands and learning about conservation
- Maintaining aging infrastructure and planning for the future to meet the needs and desires of Missouri citizens

2014–2015 CI/IT Accomplishments

Construction Improvements

- Completed two major construction improvements projects with 75 percent Sportfish Restoration Grant reimbursements at MDC fish hatcheries.
- Completed design of the second phase of the Busch Range Renovation and advertised the project for bids.
- Completed CART agreements with 54 entities for placing 79,908 tons of rock on 446 miles of public roads leading to conservation areas.
- Completed Exhibit Planning and Design for Runge Conservation Nature Center.
- Completed shooting range improvements at Rocky Fork Lakes Conservation Area
- Completed improvements to the Greenbrier Tract and Pool 1 Fishing Access at Duck Creek Conservation Area

Information Technology Improvements

- Developed the initial version of the “MO Hunting” mobile application and developed several updates including adding the “notching” capability to correspond with the new regulation that allows an electronic permit stored on your mobile device to be a valid permit.
- Developed the “Agent Online” application that is a replacement for the Arrest Records, Telecheck Lookup, and Telecheck Interface applications.
- Completed development of a new application for the George O. White Nursery that will replace old stand-alone applications.
- Completed development of a new Forest Inventory and Timber Sale (FITS) application.
- Implemented Phase 1 of the Unified Communications Program by replacing the Microsoft Communicator instant messaging and Live Meeting online meeting systems with new Cisco Jabber and WebEx systems, which are vendor supported and offer more features, for all agency employees on 1,400 computers statewide.
- Researched and implemented new low-cost, network-attached storage systems at three small field office locations to provide data sharing and data backup where it did not exist before, and crafted a long-term strategy to provide these for other small field offices.

Realty Committee

Who the Committee is:

The Committee chairman is the Deputy Director — Administration and Division Chiefs with resource management responsibilities sit on the committee. Fisheries, Forestry, and Wildlife divisions are all voting members of the committee. Realty Services, Policy, and Administrative Services all provide assistance and support to the committee.

What the Committee is:

The Realty Committee is responsible for developing strategic priorities for real estate activities, including acquisition, disposal, easements, right of ways, boundary issues, and all related real estate activities. The committee is responsible for reviewing and recommending land transactions throughout the Department.

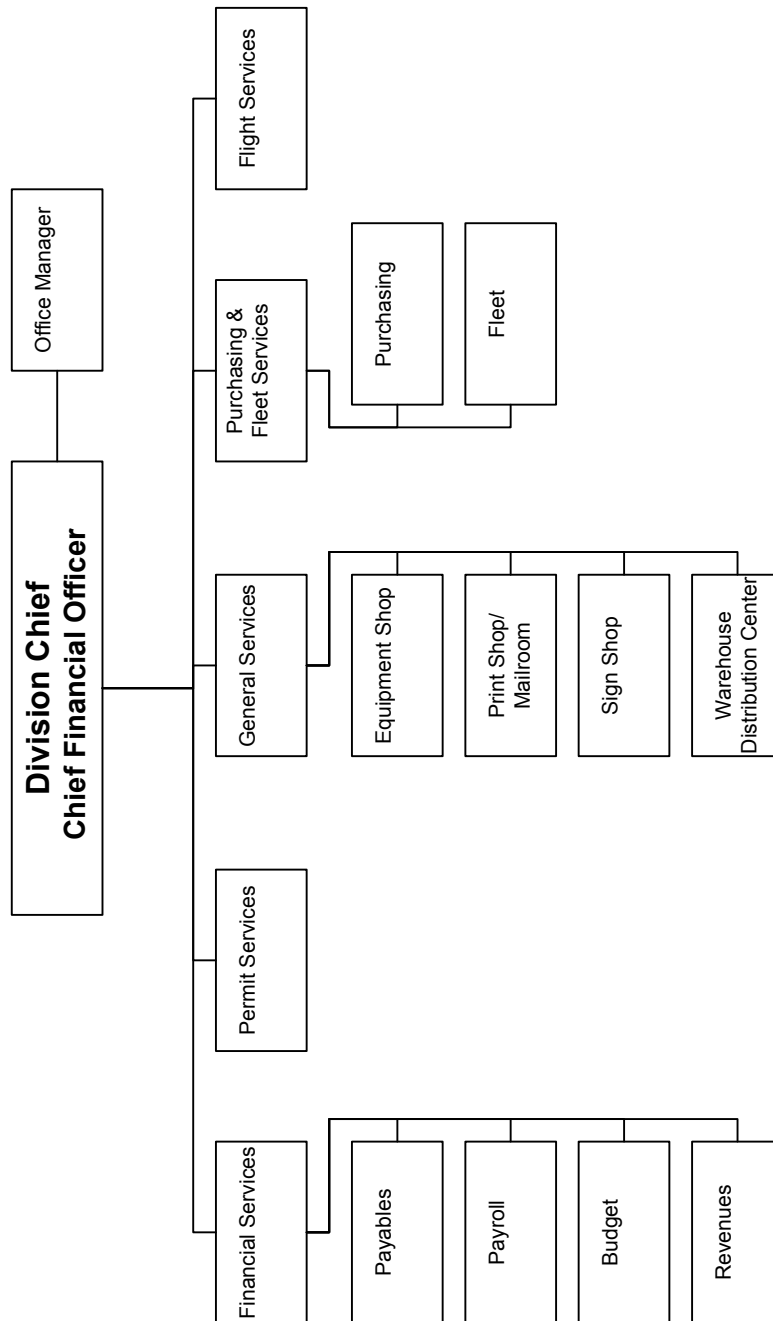
Major Challenges:

- Balancing the Department's responsibility to manage and protect Missouri's natural resources related to holding land in public trust.
- Protecting and preserving unique natural resource features, wildlife and fisheries habitats, and populations through holding land in public trust.
- Providing Missouri citizens a readily available opportunity to explore, learn, and enjoy Missouri's natural resources through land held in public trust.

2014–2015 Realty Accomplishments

- Purchased land in Pemiscot, New Madrid, Morgan, Sullivan, Howell, and Livingston counties that will protect land and water resources for appreciation and use by citizens to preserve Missouri's outdoor heritage through additional public access and provide additional outdoor recreation opportunities.
- Accepted a donation from the estate of Paul E. Crawford and the heirs-at-law of William Edward and Ethel M. Crawford.
- Conveyed a portion of a tower site to a fire protection district to relocate a fire station allowing for improved response time to house and other structure fires, wildfires, and other emergencies.

Administrative Services Division



Administrative Services Division

Goals

- Ensure sound financial accountability and transparency in all areas of operation
- Develop and execute a comprehensive maintenance program that includes scheduled replacement of equipment, preserving the overall value of these assets, circumventing costly repairs, and maintaining the lifespan of the assets
- Move the Permit Point of Sale System to the next generation using online capabilities at the vendor level.

Programs

Financial Services: This section provides a broad range of financial functions that support the Department's operations, while carefully managing the agency's assets that have been entrusted to its care. Revenue projections and management, internal and executive budget management, financial analytical support, agricultural crop management, accounts payable, and the Department's payroll are the functions this unit oversees.

Permit Services: This unit is responsible for the distribution and management of point-of-sale automated permits, managed hunt/special permits, and commercial and landowner permits.

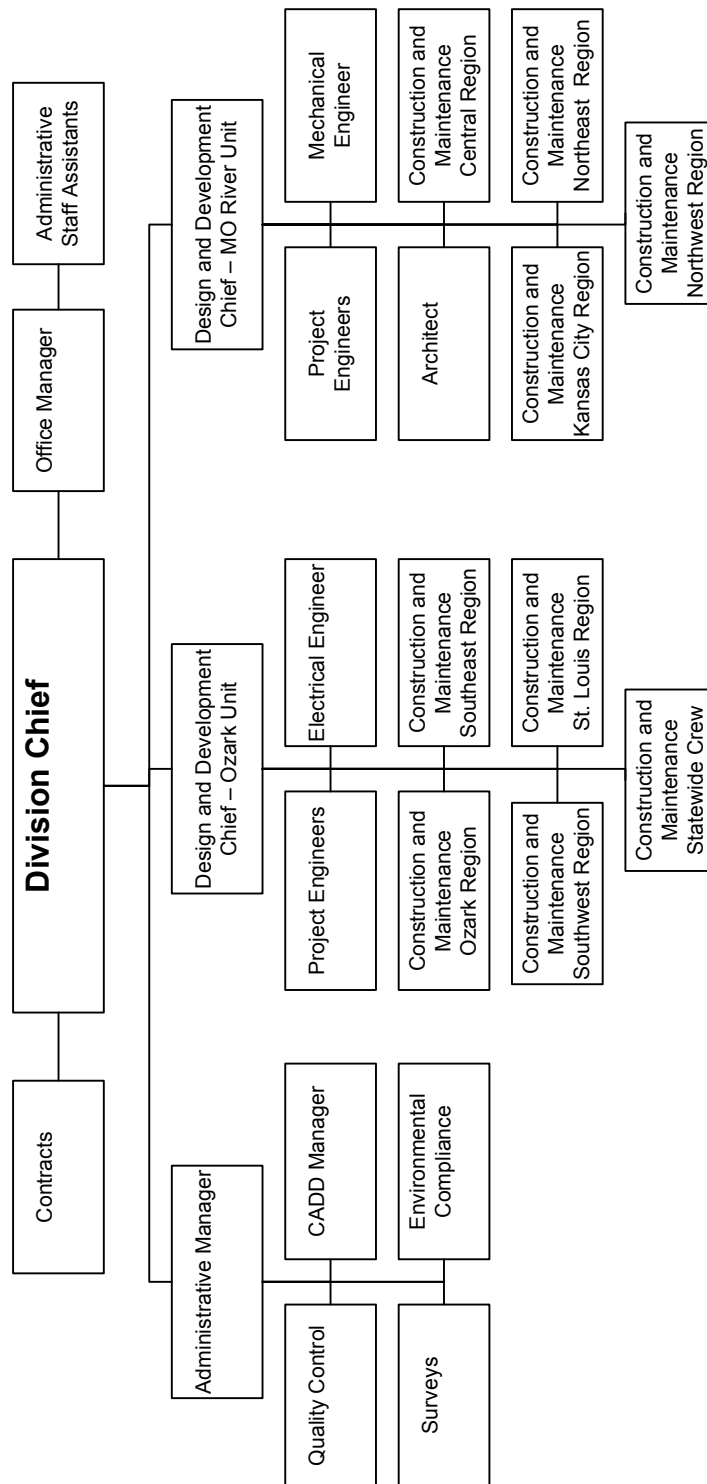
Purchasing and Fleet Services: This unit provides support for purchases of services and commodities, ensuring compliance with state purchasing laws and Department policies and procedures. It is also responsible for the operations of the Department's fleet, orders Department vehicles and heavy equipment, and the fixed-asset inventory.

General Services: This unit oversees equipment management and maintenance, sign production, distribution center operations, and printing and mailing functions.

Flight Services: This unit provides flight services for the Department resource functions such as wildlife management, fire control, and enforcement. Flight Services is responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of Department-owned aviation equipment.

Administrative Services Division makes every effort to achieve its mission by maintaining the financial integrity of the Department and ensuring prudent and wise use of its assets. We provide a broad range of high-quality support services to the Department's staff and programs, from acquiring and maintaining Department equipment to the implementation of e-permits.

Design and Development Division



Design and Development Division

Goals

- Design and construct public-use facilities that are in harmony with the environment and enhance public use of our natural resources
- Provide sound conservation engineering assistance to other Department divisions and outside partners (communities, counties, and landowners)
- Provide high-quality maintenance to Department facilities and conservation areas
- Provide excellent and timely customer service

Programs

Engineering and Architecture: The division provides engineering and architectural designs to implement capital improvement (CI) budget. Staff handles all aspects of design and development on projects, which may include performing investigations, conducting feasibility studies and/or environmental assessments, preparing design drawings with associated contract specifications, and construction management services. Types of projects include boat accesses, docks, roads, parking areas, office and storage buildings, fish hatcheries, fishing lakes and ponds, nature centers, shooting ranges, trails, and wetlands.

Technical Support: In addition to handling the CI projects, engineering staff also provide support and design expertise on non-capital improvement projects to Department divisions. Staff also provide design drawings and estimated quantities on the Department's repair and renovation projects. These efforts support our regional construction and maintenance superintendents and field resource staff.

Surveys: Employees in this unit are responsible for engineering and construction surveys and land boundary surveying for property boundary delineation.

Construction and Maintenance: In each region, the division maintains superintendents, carpenters, equipment operators, and facility maintenance technicians. This staff is responsible for the construction of capital-improvement projects assigned to it, as well as small construction projects, and repair and renovation projects needed by other Department divisions. They provide facility maintenance to nature centers and regional offices, and perform routine maintenance at unstaffed department areas. Other maintenance tasks include mowing grass, grading parking areas and entry roads, cleaning boat ramps, and performing minor maintenance on privies, docks, and pavilions.

County Aid Road Trust (CART): The division administers the Department's CART Program, which involves cost sharing of roadway maintenance with counties and other governmental subdivisions to help ensure that roads accessing Department areas are properly maintained and provide adequate access.

Environmental Compliance: The division coordinates and obtains regulatory environmental permits and cultural clearances for all Department construction and management activities involving soil disturbance on public lands owned and managed by the Department.


```

graph TD
    DC[Division Chief] --> FPS[Field Programs Supervisor]
    DC --> FPs[Field Programs Specialist]
    DC --> FISM[Field Information Systems Manager]
    DC --> OM[Office Manager]
    DC --> ASA[Administrative Staff Assistants]
    FPS --> FOC[Field Operations Chief]
    FPs --> FOC
    FISM --> FOC
    FOC --> FPS2[Field Programs Specialist]
    FOC --> FAM[Fisheries Administrative Manager]
    FOC --> SSPS[Stream Services Program Supervisor]
    FAM --> AHS[1 Aquatic Habitat Specialist]
    FAM --> BRS[1 Big River Specialist]
    SSPS --> FPC[2 Fisheries Program Coordinators]
    SSPS --> ST[Stream Team]
    FPs2 --> HSM[Hatchery Systems Manager]
    HSM --> AAHS[Aquatic Animal Health Specialist]
    HSM --> CH[5 Coldwater Hatcheries]
    CH --> WH1[1 Warmwater Hatchery]
    CH --> WH2[3 Warmwater Hatcheries]
    CH --> WH3[3 Warmwater Hatcheries]
  
```


Fisheries Division

Goals

- Maintain aquatic biodiversity
- Reduce the effects of aquatic nuisance species
- Provide enjoyable fishing trips
- Protect aquatic habitat
- Inform and educate the public about Missouri's aquatic resources

Missouri's aquatic resources are vast and diverse. Missouri has about 110,000 miles of fishable rivers and streams. The state also has about 780,000 acres of lakes (36 percent public). Each year, millions of people use and enjoy our waters, and fishing continues to be one of our most popular outdoor activities. About 22 percent of our residents age 16 and older fish sometime during the year. During 2014, the Department sold 1,321,157 fishing permits and tags of all types. Fishing is big business and very important to the state's tourism industry.

Programs

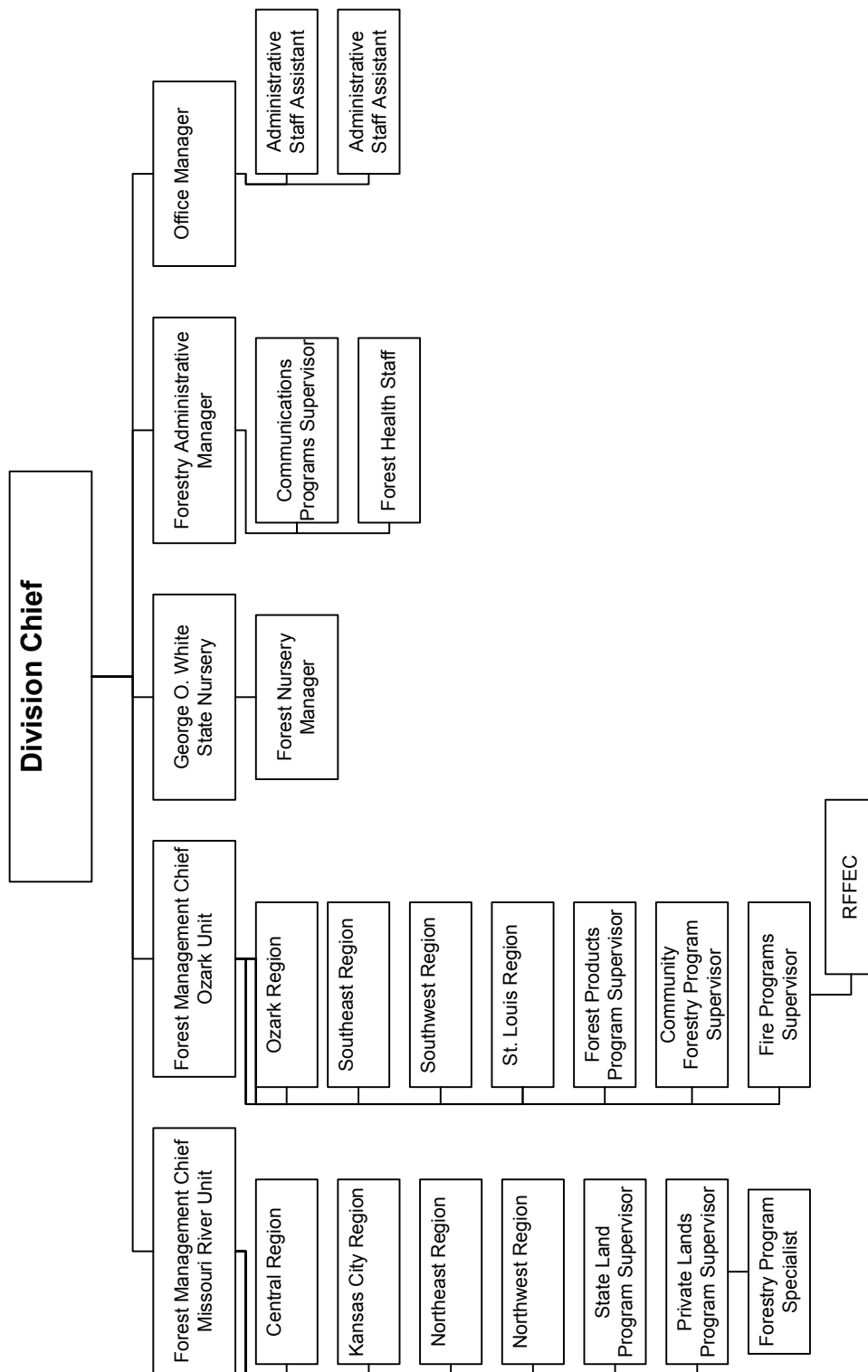
Regional staff is responsible for monitoring and maintaining the quality of the aquatic resources, managing the public fisheries resources, providing technical guidance in lake and stream management to private landowners and other state and federal agencies, providing and assisting with public information and education, and representing the division and Department on matters pertaining to the aquatic resources of their region.

The staffs of the four warmwater hatcheries are responsible for rearing the fish needed to stock public waters, waters used for special fishing events, and aquatic resource education. They also play a vital role in our efforts to restore state and federally endangered species. The five coldwater hatcheries rear the trout needed to stock public waters. Their employees are also responsible for stocking and managing the four trout parks that are enjoyed by more than 410,000 anglers each year.

The Stream Unit is responsible for the Missouri Stream Team and Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring public-involvement programs, which consisted of 80,000 citizen volunteers in 2014. Both are cosponsored by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources and the Missouri Conservation Federation. It also oversees a Stream Technical Unit, which provides technical stream services to Department staff, other state and federal agencies, and private landowners.

Central office staff direct and administer division programs, work on the acquisition and development of public fishing and boat access areas, coordinate angler recognition programs, coordinate the production of technical and popular written materials, and provide administrative support for division and Department staff and programs.

Forestry Division



Forestry Division

Goals

- Implement Forest Habitat Management in priority geographies as identified in the comprehensive conservation strategy and the Missouri Forest Action Plan.
- Engaging Missouri landowners to actively care for their woods through education, technical service, and development of partnerships with other agencies, organizations, and forest products industry.
- Raise the performance bar of the Forest Products Industry.
- Conduct public-land management activities that are scientifically based and aimed at developing and maintaining healthy forest and woodland ecosystems.
- Continue to implement a communication strategy to engage others in the delivery of key forestry messages.

Programs

Private Land: Foresters assist Missouri landowners with forest management through one-on-one contacts. Foresters often use the Tree Farm program, Forest Stewardship program, state and federal cost-share programs, and offer technical advice to assist landowners. We help 1,767 landowners with management on 106,881-plus acres.

Public Land: The division manages more than 440,000 acres of public forest land. Foresters also provide technical assistance on lands managed by the Wildlife Division. We complete 64,745 acres of active management. This includes forest inventory, tree planting, timber sales, forest-stand improvement, wildlife-management practices, and glade and savanna management.

Fire: We have statutory responsibility for the state's wildfire suppression. Last year, 2,204 fires burned 16,000 acres in Missouri. Division personnel work closely with over 800 fire departments to offer training, provide federal excess property, provide grants for the purchase of fire equipment, and promote wildfire-prevention activities.

Community Forestry: This program provides planning and technical assistance to 169 communities. In addition, the Tree Resource Improvement and Maintenance (TRIM) program provided cost-share assistance to 48 Missouri communities for tree planting and maintenance of their community forest resources. In partnership with the National Arbor Day Foundation we promote and administer the Tree City USA program certifying 85 communities for dedicated care of their tree resource, the TreeLine USA program recognizing 11 utility providers in the state for quality tree care, and the Tree Campus USA program recognizing 7 colleges and universities in the state for dedicated care of their tree resource.

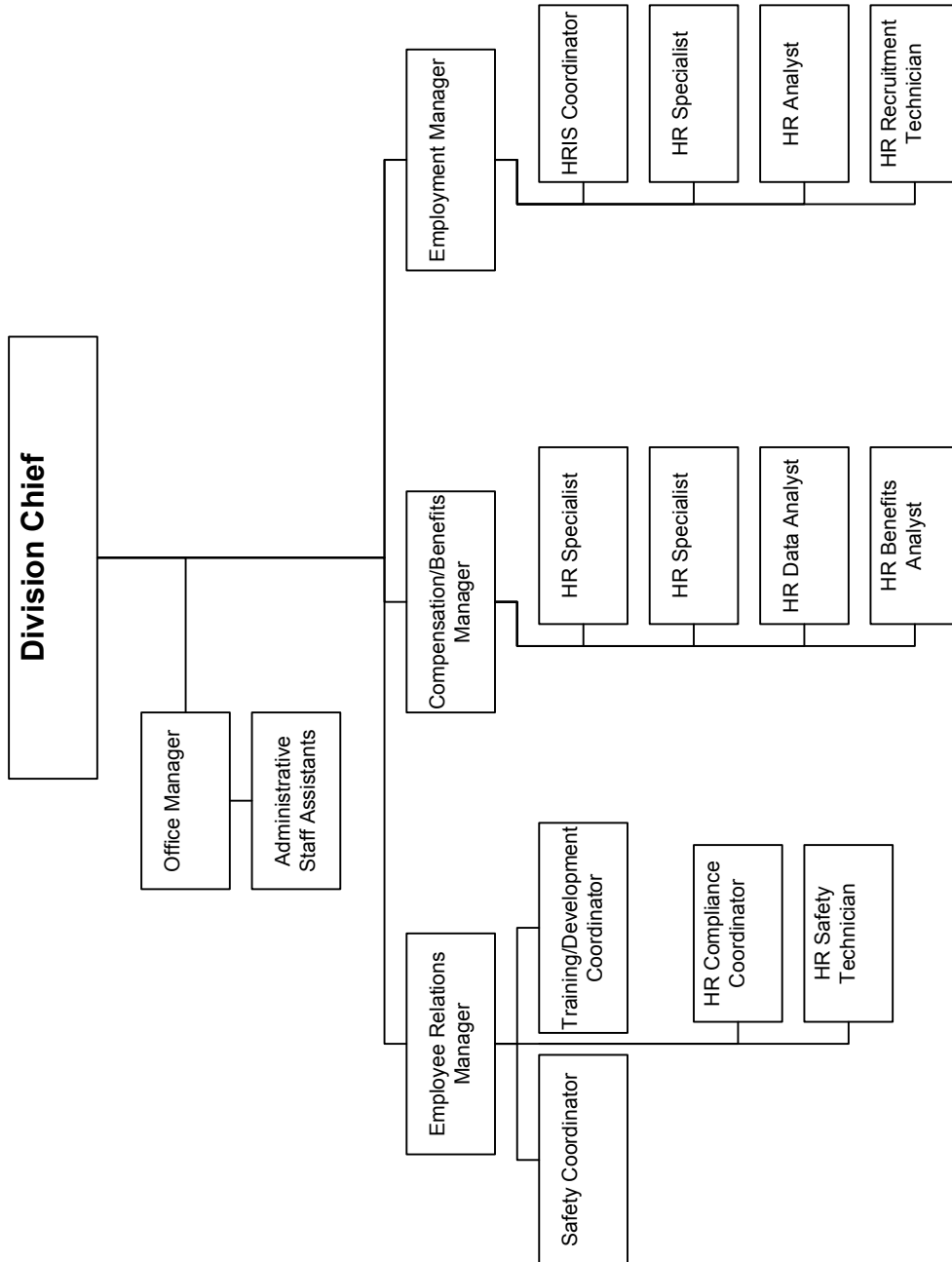
Forest Products: This program provides technical assistance to the wood products industry and statewide promotion of Best Management Practices (BMPs) for water quality on timber sales. We work with the Missouri Forest Products Association to provide programs such as the Professional Timber Harvesters and Master Logger Certification programs. We work with entities interested in the emerging bio-energy field and provide technical training for field foresters regarding wood use, timber harvesting techniques, and contracting and implementing BMPs.

Communication: Forestry Division works closely with the Outreach and Education Division to increase Missourians' understanding of their states forest resources and proper forest management activities. Foresters conducted 168 field days, 44 school programs, and 110 special events. Division is also active in the continued development and promotion of the Trees Work campaign. Public awareness of the benefits associated with trees rose 13 percent in three communities that received targeted messaging over the last three fiscal years.

State Forest Nursery: The nursery annually grows and distributes approximately 3 million seedlings of more than 60 species. The seedlings include trees and shrubs suitable for reforestation and wildlife-habitat restoration activities. The seedlings are planted on both public and private land throughout the state.

Forest Health: The forest health program's goal is to ensure that Missouri has a healthy and growing forest resource. Diagnosing, monitoring, and providing management solutions for a wide range of pests are components of this program. A significant amount of time and effort is spent overseeing monitoring efforts for invasive pests such as gypsy moth, emerald ash borer, and thousand cankers disease of black walnut. Forest health staff had 624 contacts where they provided diagnoses and recommendations.

Human Resources Division



Human Resources Division

Goals

- Automate and streamline Human Resources processes
- Professional Development Academy and Safety Program: Identify and implement current and future Department-wide training needs
- Research and implement health insurance changes required by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act

Programs

Human Resources: Staff is responsible for development and administration of a department-wide human resources program.

Health Insurance: Staff administer a comprehensive medical and life-insurance program and advise the Conservation Employees' Benefits Plan Board of Trustees on mandatory requirements of legislation, such as the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

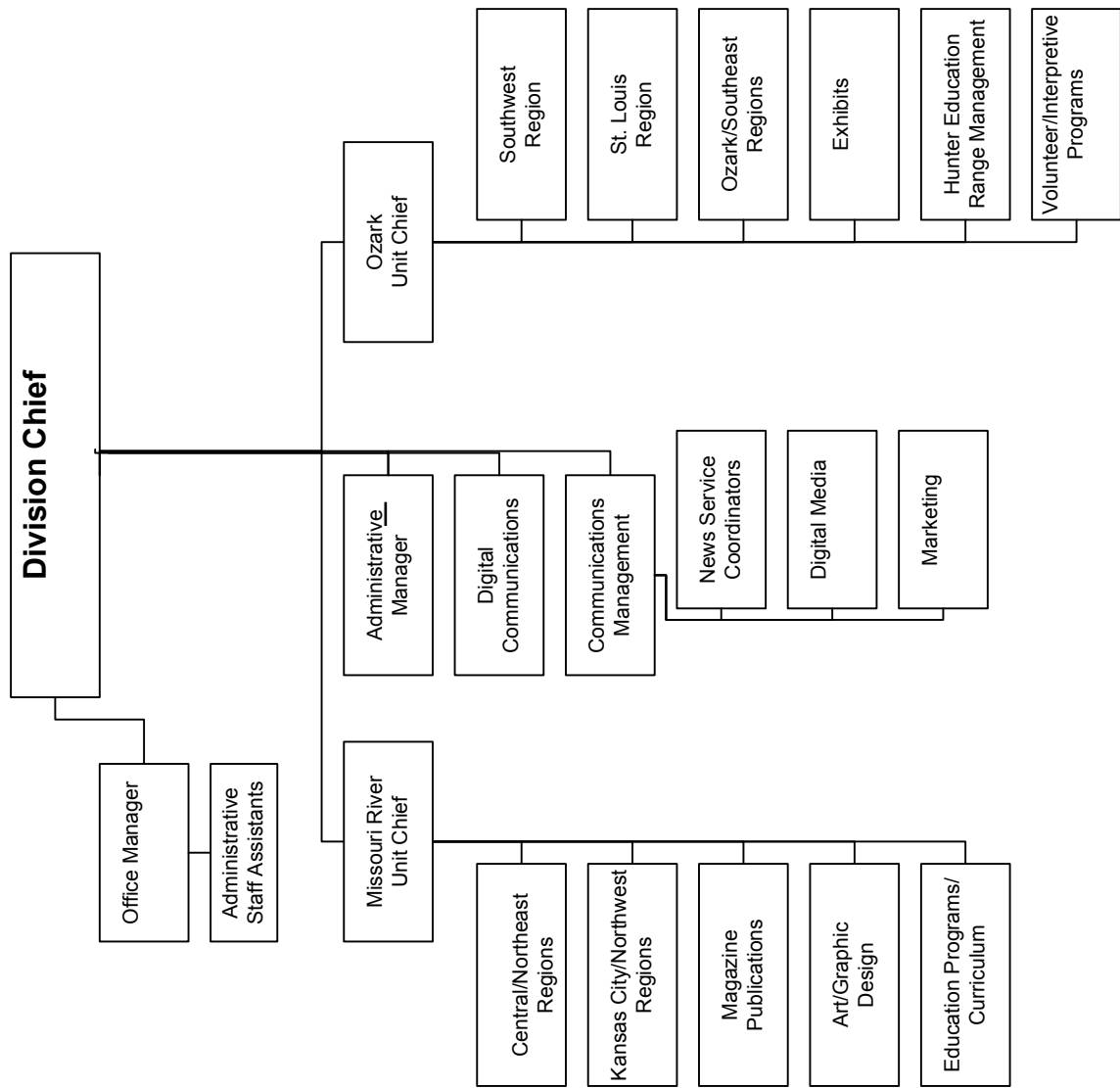
Compensation and Benefits: Staff perform compensation and classification activities that are used to support a total rewards program, which is both competitive and fiscally responsible. Staff also administer significant employee-benefits programs such as wellness, which includes health screenings and health education and an Employee Assistance Program.

Recruitment and Selection: Staff use a variety of recruitment methods to attract qualified applicants for job and assists supervisors with all activities during the evaluation and recommendation processes. Staff monitor the Department's affirmative-action effort to ensure equal-employment opportunities

Vendor Apparel: Staff maintain the vendor apparel contract to ensure employee appearance projects an efficient and professionally operated Department and that staff are recognized as Department employees.

Employee Relations: Staff administer and develop new or revised Human Resources policies that help supervisors guide employees uniformly and fairly. Staff track state and federal laws, executive orders, and regulations that address human resources management issues, and work to ensure the Department is in compliance. Staff also assist employees and supervisors during dispute resolution and corrective action processes to ensure objective, fair, and appropriate actions occur. Staff also administer the Professional Development Academy, the Department-wide Safety Program and Informed Consent Training, a course aimed at making the problem-solving and decision-making of public agencies both more responsive (to public concerns) and more responsible (for accomplishing our mission).

Outreach and Education Division



Outreach and Education Division

Goals

- Teach Missourians about healthy and sustainable plant and animal communities
- Empower all Missourians with the skills and knowledge to enjoy the outdoors
- Help citizens understand how conservation benefits Missouri and how participation in outdoor activities enriches their lives
- Communicate the importance of science-based decisions in managing Missouri's fish, forest, and wildlife
- Instill an understanding of outdoor ethics and personal responsibility in practicing ethical, respectful outdoor behaviors
- Help Missourians understand these key concepts of conservation:
 - a. A healthy environment needs a diverse mix of plants and animals
 - b. Forests, grasslands, rivers, and wetlands are always changing
 - c. What goes onto or into the ground flows downhill into streams and rivers, ponds, and lakes
 - d. Hunting, fishing, trapping, and harvesting wood are part of Missouri's heritage, provide valuable resources, and when done properly, are tools that can be used to improve and maintain the health of our fish, forests, and wildlife.

Programs

Outreach: The *Missouri Conservationist* magazine is mailed to more than 575,000 subscribers each month and covers a variety of nature, conservation, and outdoor-recreation subjects. *Xplor*, a kids' magazine, has more than 180,000 subscribers and offers suggestions for family-oriented outdoor activities. We serve up millions of Web pages each year, produce free publications, for-sale books, and news releases on topics as diverse as bird identification, hunting and fishing regulations, and how to create wildlife habitat. The ombudsman helps answer citizens' questions and helps to investigate concerns and resolve complaints.

Conservation Nature Centers, Education Centers, and Visitor Centers: These are located in Jefferson City, Kirkwood, Blue Springs, Springfield, Cape Girardeau, St. Charles, Winona, St. Louis, Branson, and Glencoe. Exhibits and naturalist-led programs, as well as walking trails, offer about a million visitors each year a variety of opportunities to learn about and enjoy Missouri's nature. These facilities host programs for families, women, and other target audiences that teach skills to enjoy the outdoors.

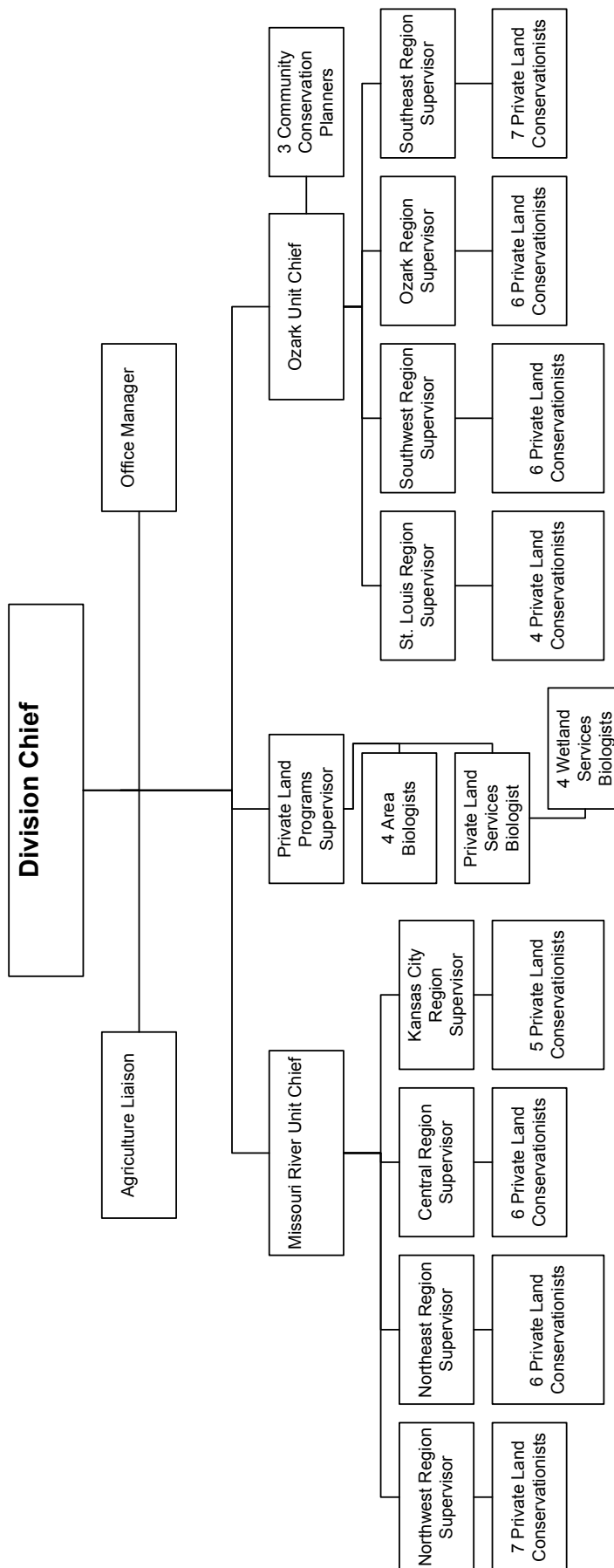
Hunter Education: Since 1988, hunter-education training has been mandatory for all hunters born on or after Jan. 1, 1967. O&E staff works with conservation agents to coordinate volunteer hunter-educators, who provide about 1,000 classes each year. These result in hunter certification of about 20,000 people annually. An online course expands the training opportunities.

Shooting Range/Outdoor Education Centers: Five staffed shooting ranges provide safe, inviting places for hunters and others to practice shooting rifles, shotguns, handguns, and archery equipment. Classes are offered to the public and designed to give beginning shooters and hunters the skills they need. More than 170,000 people each year use the staffed ranges. In addition, more than 75 unstaffed ranges (including both firearms and archery ranges) serve Missourians throughout the state.

Citizen Involvement: Several programs help Missourians promote conservation at a statewide and grass-roots level. More than 2,500 citizens volunteer through a number of different programs. More than 100 citizens volunteer at staffed shooting ranges, more than 400 at nature centers, more than 1,000 through the Master Naturalist program, and more than 700 citizens are involved in the Volunteer Hunter Education program. This translates to more than 130,000 volunteer hours for conservation activities.

Discover Nature Schools: Missouri's children are the key to Missouri's future. Working closely with the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, we have developed conservation education curriculum materials for grades pre-kindergarten through 12 that are in 97 percent of Missouri school districts. These curriculums use Missouri examples to teach science-based concepts. The materials are available to all Missouri schools at no charge.

Private Land Services Division



Private Land Services Division

Goals

- Provide timely technical advice to private landowners who request assistance
- Help interested private landowners provide meaningful benefits to fish, forest, and wildlife resources that need attention
- Increase awareness of conservation importance by connecting with agriculture and communities

Programs

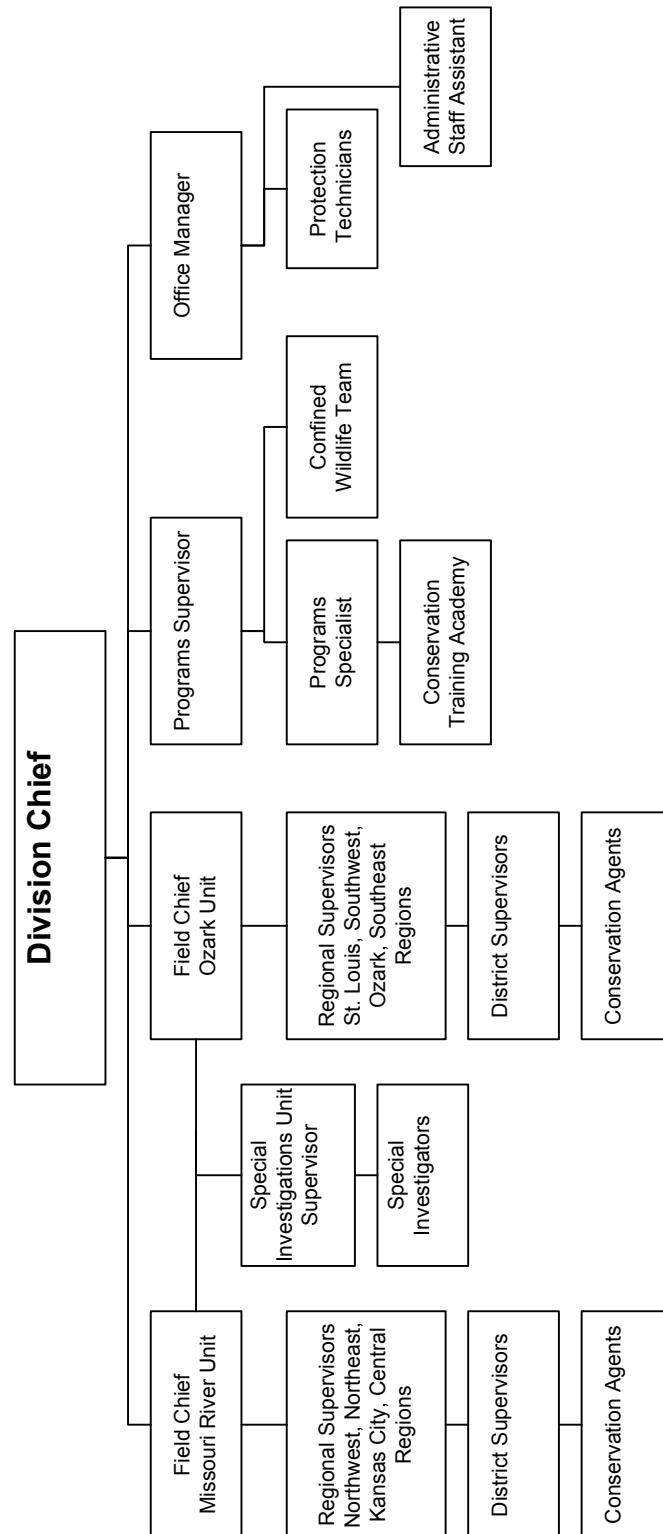
Technical Support: Private Land Conservationists are available to evaluate resource needs and provide advice/recommendations to private landowners through in-office or on-ground visits, as well as workshops, field days and other initiatives. Most of these positions are co-located in USDA service centers to make contact easy for private landowners throughout the state.

Financial Assistance: The Department has established effective working partnerships with private landowners through the Natural Resources Conservation Service and Farm Service Agency to integrate fish, forest, and wildlife considerations into implementation of Farm Bill programs that include Conservation Reserve Program, Wetland Reserve Program, Environmental Quality Incentives Program, Grassland Reserve Program, Conservation Stewardship Program and Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program. The Department is also in partnership with non-governmental organizations such as Ducks Unlimited, Quail Unlimited, the National Wild Turkey Federation, Quail Forever, Pheasants Forever, and Quail and Upland Wildlife Federation to develop cost-share and other initiatives through matching agreements.

Agriculture Liaison: Liaison efforts with agricultural agencies and groups foster communication and understanding of fish, forest, and wildlife issues as they relate to agriculture. These efforts are important since 65 percent of the land area of Missouri is included in farms.

Community Conservation: Community Conservation Planners in Kansas City, St. Louis, and Springfield/Branson/Joplin areas are available to deliver natural-resource technical services at the municipal, county, and regional levels. Their job focus is to work with communities, urban planners, and developers to help them make informed land-use decisions that incorporate the conservation of Missouri's fish, forest, and wildlife resources.

Protection Division



Protection Division

Goals

- Provide high-quality resource law-enforcement services to the public for protection and conservation of Missouri's fish, forest, and wildlife, as well as for safe and proper public uses of conservation areas
- Provide opportunities for all citizens to use, enjoy, and learn about fish, forests, and wildlife through educational and informational programs and habitat management advice
- Represent the Conservation Commission, the Department, and the state with knowledgeable, respectful, well-trained, and professional employees versed in all general Department programs in every county

Programs

Conservation Agents: Agents carry out a variety of programs within their county assignments. Major job components are resource law-enforcement activities, hunter education, local media liaison duties (many with regular radio/TV programs and newspaper articles), educational and informational presentations to adult and youth groups, wildlife surveys, response to fish kills, wildlife-nuisance and damage complaints, and basic fish-, forest-, and wildlife-management advice and services to private landowners.

Conservation agents contacted 178,828 hunters and anglers in fiscal year 2015 to ensure compliance and to provide regulation information. During these contacts, agents noted 25,245 resource violations, issued 3,477 written warnings, and made 7,066 arrests. From those 7,066 arrests, of those cases adjudicated, 91 percent resulted in a guilty plea or verdict. This high conviction rate indicates excellent public support and high-quality work by agents.

Operation Game Thief: Operation Game Thief provides a way for citizens to anonymously report poaching incidents with the opportunity for a monetary reward. In the calendar year 2014, OGT produced 269 arrests from 822 telephone calls, which resulted in \$10,150 in reward money being paid to informants. The Operation Game Thief traveling exhibit was used at 12 events, including the state fair.

Revocations: Missouri is a participating state in the Interstate Wildlife Violator Compact (IWVC). The compact is a legal organization of the wildlife agencies of 44 member states that agree to reciprocally honor revocations/suspensions of hunting, fishing, and trapping privileges for wildlife-related violations. During the last fiscal year, 2,535 people from other states had their privileges revoked in Missouri through provisions of the Interstate Wildlife Violator Compact; an additional 97 were revoked for cause by the Conservation Commission in Missouri and submitted to the IWVC. Participation in the compact also benefits Missourians who travel to other compact member states for hunting and fishing activities. If found in violation, they may be given the opportunity to resolve the citation by mail rather than being required to post a bond before leaving the member state. They are subject to revocation by all compact states if the citation is ignored.

Hunter Education: Hunter-education certification or apprentice hunter authorization is required for purchasing any type of Missouri firearm-hunting permit for people born on or after Jan. 1, 1967 (except the youth deer and turkey hunting permit). Conservation agents work with Outreach and Education Division personnel and approximately 1,100 volunteer instructors to coordinate hunter education courses in all 114 Missouri counties. Protection Division personnel also are responsible for investigating hunting incidents throughout the state.

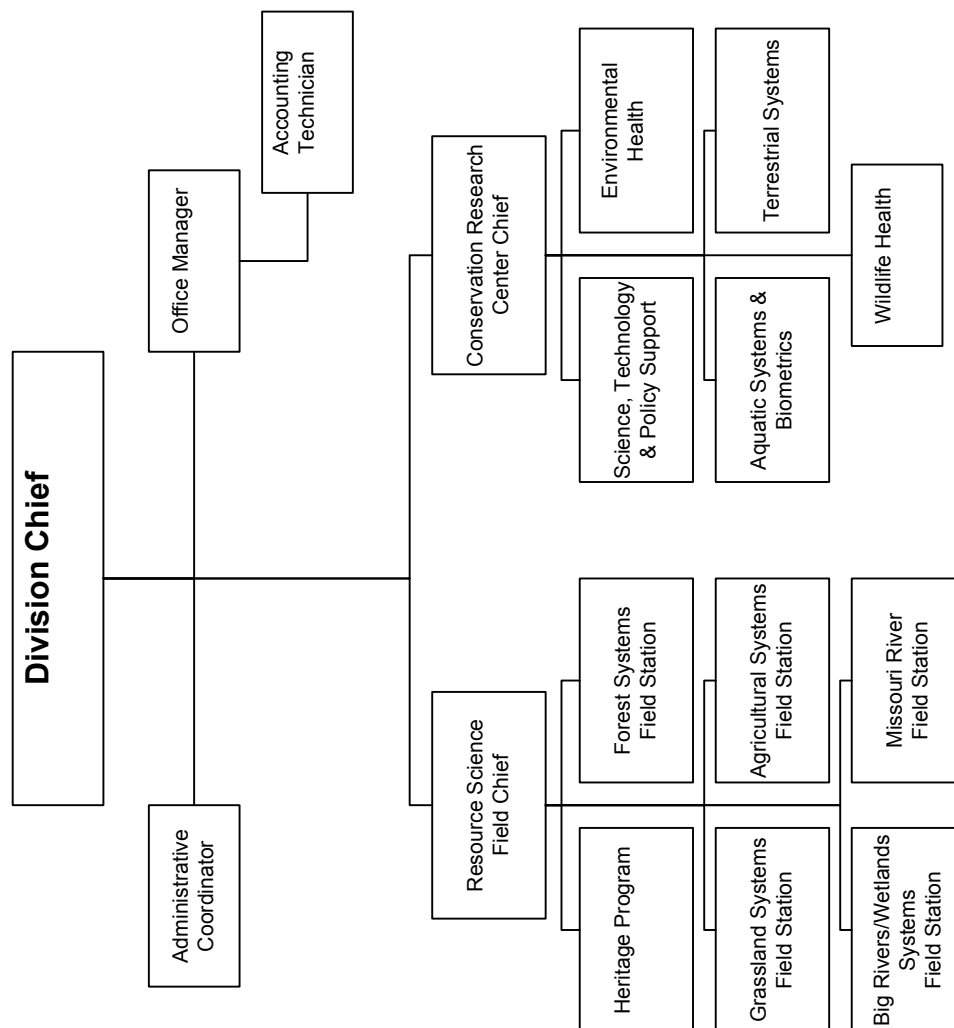
Hunting Method Exemption Program: The Hunting Method Exemption program provides special exemptions to physically disabled people by allowing them to hunt and take wildlife by methods not otherwise legally permitted. During fiscal year 2015, 6,070 hunter method exemptions were approved.

Group Fishing Permit Exemptions: Protection Division administers permit-exemption authorizations to supervised groups involved in rehabilitation programs or groups of hospital patients or people with disabilities under therapy or for educational purposes. During this past fiscal year, 434 group fishing permits were issued for outings — providing fishing experiences to people who otherwise may not be able to participate in outdoor fishing activities.

Share the Harvest: Conservation agents and the Conservation Federation of Missouri coordinate the Share the Harvest program, where hunters donate deer meat to those less fortunate through established charitable organizations. During 2014, approximately 3,967 hunters donated 213,443 pounds of venison to needy Missourians. Since the inception of the program, over 3 million pounds of deer meat have been donated to Missouri citizens. Hunters donating venison to the program pay for the processing and tell the processor how many pounds of meat they want to donate. Hunters who donate their entire deer may receive a \$60 reduction in the price of processing, which is paid to the processor by the Missouri Conservation Federation. In some cases, local organizations provide additional funds for processing so there is no cost to hunters who wish to donate deer.



Resource Science Division



Resource Science Division

Goals

Natural-resource management is based on sound biological, geographical, and sociological information. An objective to establish a nationally recognized, science-based model for conservation will be accomplished by:

- Ensuring ongoing development of a comprehensive and integrated understanding of Missouri's living resources and their values to society
- Using accumulated knowledge to inform and recommend conservation actions
- Evaluating the biological and social impacts of conservation actions
- Reporting emerging knowledge of Missouri's living resources

Terrestrial Systems scientists strive to understand plant and animal habitat relationships, monitor population status, and develop harvest and species-management recommendations. Staff are regularly involved with specialized projects to monitor wildlife, plant diversity, and plant and animal population changes. They also are responsible for developing harvest regulations for upland species such as deer, turkey, and furbearers.

Aquatic Systems and Biometrics scientists conduct research and surveys that focus on issues involving fisheries management, wetland and waterfowl management, fish communities, watersheds, stream-riparian-floodplain systems, reservoirs, in-stream flow, species of conservation concern, and interactions among predators and prey. This group develops harvest management recommendations for statewide fish populations, waterfowl, and other migratory birds. Biometricians ensure statistically sound study designs and the use of appropriate statistical techniques to analyze and interpret complex natural resources questions.

Science, Technology and Policy Support staff work to link and improve access to databases that document Missouri's rich biodiversity and support research and management objectives. Post-season hunter and angler harvest surveys, attitude surveys, public-use surveys, and focus groups are conducted to better understand the opinions and behaviors of Missouri resource users and to ensure that human-dimensions information is integrated with biological information to inform management decisions. Natural-resource economics data are collected in conjunction with the public use and attitude information. GIS staff use geospatial technology and products to support natural resource management and policy decisions, archive the processes and evaluate the results. The GIS program supports ArcGIS users throughout the Department. Courses are conducted to help train new ArcGIS users and improve the skills of existing users.

The **Environmental Health** unit provides services that protect aquatic biodiversity such as mussel conservation and genetics research and monitors water quality. Staff coordinate pollution and fish-kill investigations in conjunction with the Department of Natural Resources and monitor contaminants in fish in coordination with the Department of Health.

The **Wildlife Health** unit coordinates and conducts research and monitoring programs statewide for the prevention, detection, control, and management of emerging and known diseases occurring in wildlife populations. Staff collaborate with local, state, federal, and private stakeholders to address concerns about the impact of wildlife diseases on the public and domestic animal health. Information provided by this unit is used to inform Department regulations, policy and management decisions to prevent, control and/or mitigate wildlife health issues.

The **Heritage Program** unit provides expertise and location information to the Department, its partners, and the public on plants, reptiles and amphibians, karst communities, mammals, and insects of conservation concern by means of workshops, publications, and personal contact. By maintaining the Missouri Natural Heritage Database, this program tracks the status and presence of 1,221 species of conservation concern and natural communities. Scientists survey for species presence and population trends, develop life-history information, and make management evaluations. Staff ensure accurate documentation and archiving of occurrences of species of conservation concern and natural communities that can be used for regulation purposes and management.

The **Field Unit of Resource Science Division** is leading regional management evaluations by developing protocols and study designs with the goal of learning by doing. Field stations, actively integrated with the division's centralized functions, focus on improving understanding of ecological systems, functions, and processes by working with regional staff throughout the state.

- 1) The **Grasslands Systems Field Station in Clinton** focuses on ecological processes and management implications for cool- and warm-season grass pastures and hay lands, native prairie, savannas and glades, and grassland-associated fish, invertebrate, wildlife species of conservation concern and all streams and impoundments fed by grassland watersheds.
- 2) The **Forest Systems Field Station in West Plains** focuses on ecological processes and management implications for upland forests, glades, savannas, springs, karst, fens and cold- and warm-water streams and impoundments drained by forested watersheds and management of forest-associated fish, invertebrate, and wildlife species of conservation concern.
- 3) The **Big Rivers and Wetlands Systems Field Station in Jackson** focuses on Missouri's large rivers and associated floodplains to understand landscape-level ecological processes. Staff develop tools and strategies to improve channel and floodplain habitats, bottomland forests, and wetlands for fish, invertebrate, and wildlife communities including species of conservation concern.
- 4) The **Agricultural Systems Field Station in Kirksville** emphasizes annually cropped lands that produce cereal grains, oil crops, crops for human consumption, and annually planted livestock forages. Also included in the field station's focus are retired crop lands including CRP plantings, cool-season grass pastures and old fields, concentrated-livestock operations, streams and impoundments drained by agricultural watersheds and management for agriculturally associated fish, invertebrate, and wildlife species of conservation concern.
- 5) The **Missouri River Field Station in Chillicothe** focuses on issues directly related to management of the Missouri River. Many aspects of large-river ecology are addressed by the Big Rivers and Wetlands Field Station, including some important to the Missouri River. However, several active restoration and recovery programs are being conducted along the Missouri River, and this field station brings a focused and coordinated monitoring approach among agencies to help ensure the success of these programs.

Programs

Population management: Manage for and, when feasible, restore viable populations of plants, fish, and wildlife compatible with the ecological capability of the land and balanced with the desires of resource users and the public.

Resource Science Division identifies priority population management challenges and develops recommendations, in collaboration with resource divisions, to manage harvested species, species of concern, and invasive species.

Ecological processes: Increase our understanding of the processes that determine habitat conditions for native and introduced animals and plants.

Erosion and deposition through water, wind, and fire are the natural disturbance and renewal processes that are essential to maintaining healthy systems and functions. The division focuses investigations on how to effectively re-establish or mimic these processes in Missouri's contemporary landscape to ensure restoration and management of plant and animal communities.

Management evaluation: Ensure that results of management and policy actions are measured and appropriately linked to resource-related outcomes, budgets, and staff time.

Ongoing evaluation of resource responses and resource uses are essential to determine whether goals are met and to understand when change is needed. Resource Science Division promotes learning by doing to improve resource-management programs and to ensure accountability of staff and budget resources.

Human dimensions: Provide and promote the use of human-dimensions information in the management decision process.

Resource Science Division collaborates with other divisions to ensure that human-dimensions information is acquired and used in policy and management decisions. This information is used to track changing public expectations, anticipate demographic trends, and ultimately provide the information needed to make sound resource policy and management decisions.

Large-scale planning: Ensure that all planning and program efforts are based on sound science and include evaluation measures.

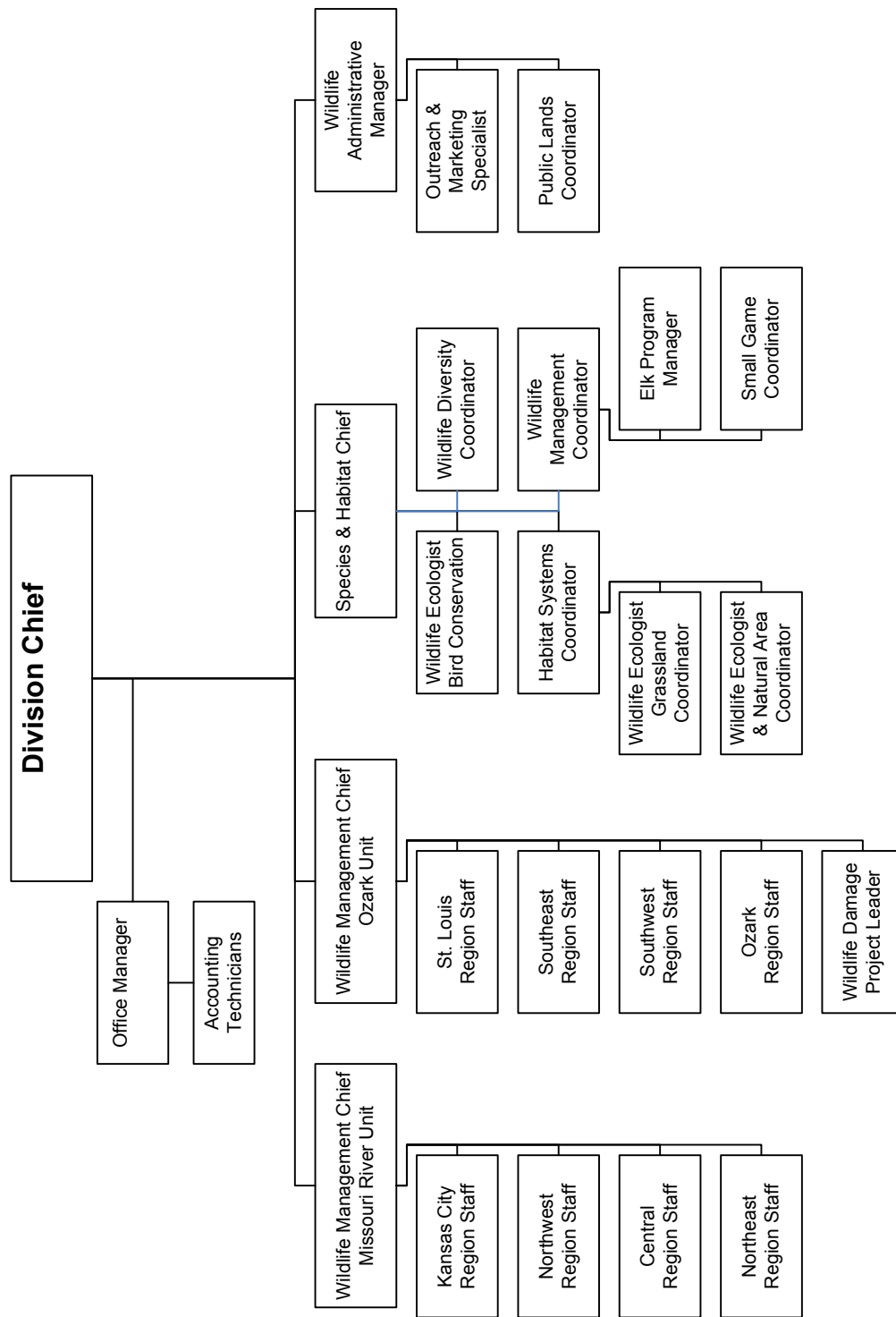
Advances in Geographic Information Systems and associated ecological and geospatial applications (e.g., Ecological Classification Systems) are used to inventory, assess, and monitor resource condition and management results at national, state, regional, and area scales.

Information transfer: Manage, share, and transfer data collected in a useful, archivable and easily obtainable format. The division ensures that information about resource investigations, population status, harvest, and public use is timely, current, accurate, and available in a form that is useful.

Environmental health: Monitor the health of aquatic and wildlife resources in the state, assist in control and mitigation of identified threats, and provide up-to-date information to guide policy and management decisions regarding resource health related issues.

Environmental health issues are addressed through research and monitoring programs for the prevention, detection, control, and management of emerging and known aquatic health, water quality and stream flow issues, and diseases of wildlife populations. Collaboration among Department Divisions as well as with other state and federal agencies is fostered to ensure the success of this program.

Wildlife Division



Wildlife Division

Goals

- Coordinate active management and restoration of Missouri's natural communities for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.
- Coordinate statewide endangered species recovery, manage species of conservation concern, and enhance all-bird conservation.
- Manage game populations for public enjoyment and reduce human-wildlife conflicts.
- Provide statewide leadership, coordination, and oversight for the Division's programs and regional operations.

Programs

Habitat Systems provides expertise and leadership to Department staff, conservation partners, and private landowners to restore and manage important wildlife habitats and natural communities like wetlands, savannas, glades, woodlands, forests, and grasslands across Missouri focusing on priority geographies. Staff manage over 536,000 acres of public land and complete more than 177,000 acres of habitat management each year. Missouri's State Wildlife Action Plan guides wildlife conservation planning and implementation. Efforts are made to increase awareness and coordinate the control of terrestrial invasive species and provide expertise and guidance to Missouri communities in matters concerning urban wildlife habitat and species management. Staff direct and coordinate the development of Missouri's Comprehensive Conservation Strategy to deliver an unprecedented and multi-disciplinary blueprint for fish, forest, and wildlife conservation actions statewide.

Wildlife Diversity coordinates and leads the restoration of species of conservation concern and promotes the enjoyment of all wildlife species. Focused programs, such as the State Wildlife Grant, Missouri Natural Areas, endangered species, and all-bird conservation efforts work to identify the highest-priority species and management efforts for recovering threatened or endangered species.

Wildlife Management and Assistance develops citizen and staff understanding of and provides technical assistance for wildlife ecology, habitat, and species management and research, harvest regulations, damage and conflict management, and disease management. Staff integrate biological and social sciences related to wildlife population trends and citizen expectations of wildlife management and work to improve wildlife regulations to ensure opportunities to pursue large and small game. Hunting is used as a means to achieve and sustain healthy game populations. Deer, dove, turkey, and waterfowl managed hunts are provided on conservation areas for the public, including those specific to youth and those with disabilities. Staff provide expertise and guidance to Missouri communities in matters concerning urban wildlife management, such as nuisance issues and urban deer management programs.

Wildlife Administration provides leadership and strategic guidance for Wildlife Division's programs and activities that conserve Missouri's wildlife species and habitats locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally. To promote the appreciation of the state's wildlife resources, this program manages funding support, budgeting, accomplishment reporting, regulation coordination, public communication and marketing, area planning, and habitat inventory. The administration of the Wildlife Restoration Grant, State Wildlife Grant, North American Wetlands Conservation Act grants, and memorandums of agreement with strategic partner groups assist in maintaining conservation relationships that rehabilitate critical habitat and provide support for maintenance, habitat management, and resource planning on conservation lands. Approximately 360 conservation areas are managed for the purpose of welcoming visitors and providing habitat for native plant and animal species. The program also promotes professional development.

Conservation by the Numbers

- ▲ Actual Funds Available and Disbursements
- ▲ Number of Deer Harvested by County
- ▲ Number of Turkeys Harvested by County
- ▲ Acres of Conservation Land by County
- ▲ Payment In-lieu of Taxes (PILT) by County
- ▲ County Aid Road Trust (CART) Program
- ▲ Capital Improvement Projects Funding by County
- ▲ Number of Deer and Turkey Permit Holders by County of Residence
- ▲ Number of Fishing Permit Holders by County of Residence
- ▲ Number of Small Game Permit Holders by County of Residence
- ▲ Number of Landowner Deer Permit Holders by County of Residence
- ▲ Number of Landowner Turkey Permit Holders by County of Residence
- ▲ Number of Hunting Permit Holders by County of Residence

MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

Actual Receipts and Disbursements
For Fiscal Year 2015

RECEIPTS

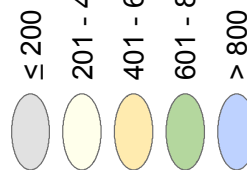
Sales Tax	\$110,528,741
Hunting, Fishing & Commercial Permit Sales	\$31,789,708
Federal Reimbursements	\$26,910,971
Agricultural Sales	\$2,890,286
Timber Sales	\$1,993,142
Other Miscellaneous Receipts	\$2,398,213
Miscellaneous Fees & Tags	\$1,305,411
Surplus Property	\$1,782,921
Interest	\$368,595
Publication Sales	\$666,232
Nursery Stock Sales	\$708,909
Grants, Gifts, Bequests & Donations	\$360,594
Contractual Services	\$518,225
Rentals	\$10,412
Miscellaneous Sales	\$154,097
Land Sales	\$512,648
Yield Tax & Other taxes	\$1,157
Refunds	\$124,196
Damage Reimbursements	\$56,320
Concession Income	\$10,570
TOTAL RECEIPTS	\$183,091,348

DISBURSEMENTS

County Assistance Payments	1,612,506
Capital Improvements	18,017,069
Information Technology	14,273,708
Fisheries	14,646,353
Forestry	19,094,366
Wildlife	23,023,263
Outreach & Education	17,433,824
Private Land Services	8,907,147
Protection	16,695,087
Resource Science	13,960,913
Regional Public Contact Offices	2,143,398
Administrative Services	14,124,362
Human Resources	2,520,631
Design & Development	14,241,701
Administration	2,884,496
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	\$183,578,824

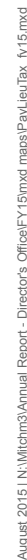


Grand Total: 255,035 Deer Harvested

[illegible]

July 2015 | N:\Mitchm3\Annual Report - Director's Office\FY15\mxd maps\Harvest\Turkey5\Class_fy15.mxd

2014–2015 MDC Annual Report **91**



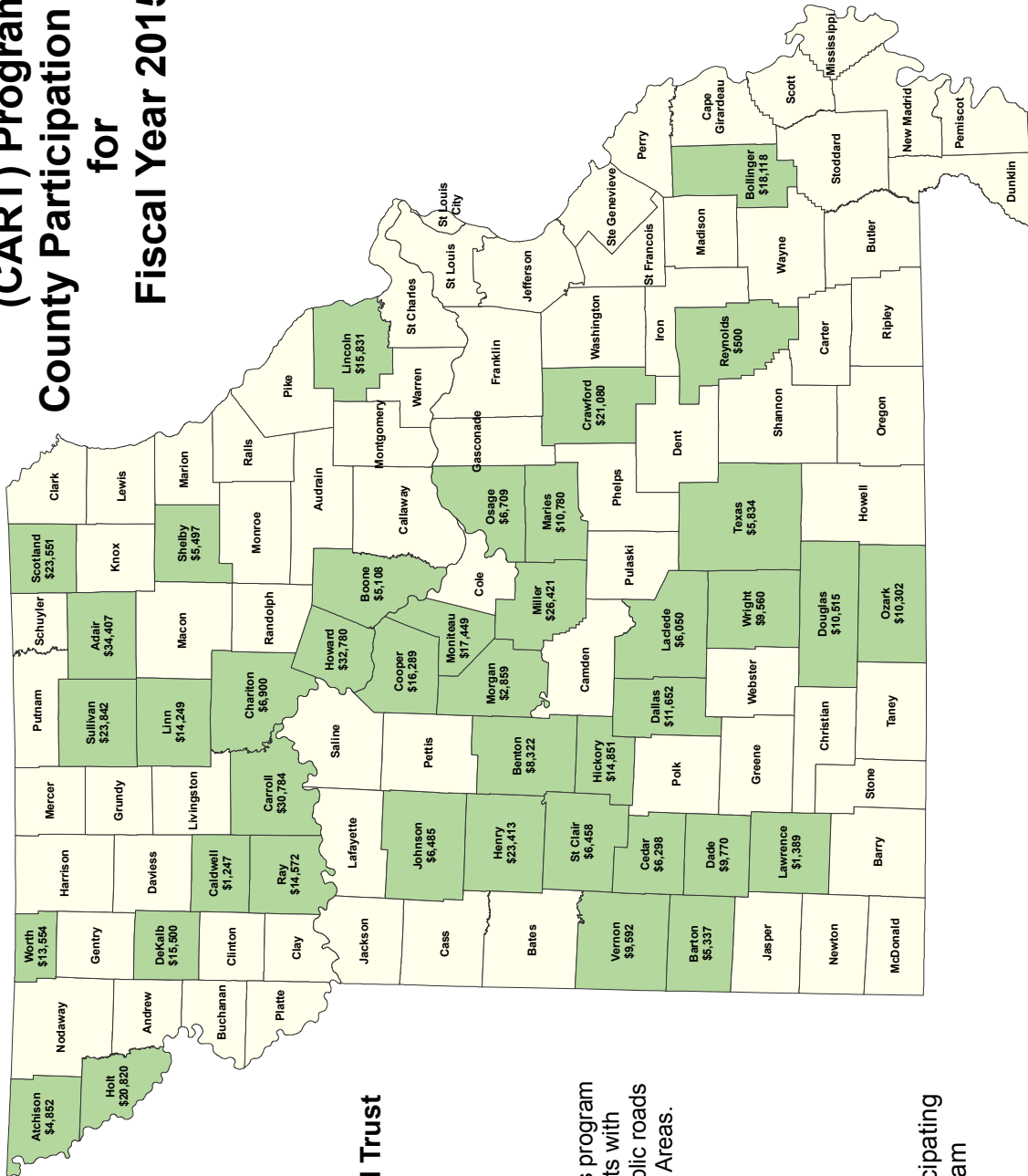
County Aid Road Trust

(CART) Program

County Participation Totals

for

Fiscal Year 2015



**County Aid Road Trust
(CART)**

Established in 1983, this program assists local governments with their maintenance of public roads accessing Conservation Areas.

Counties Participating in CART Program



Allocation by County

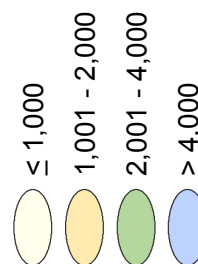
- ☐ ≤ \$20,000
☐ \$20,001 - \$50,000
☐ \$50,001 - \$1,000,000
☐ > \$1,000,000

August 2015 || N:\Mitchm3\Annual Report - Director's Office\FY15\mxd maps\CDProjects_fy15.mxd

[illegible]

Note: The total number of permit holders in a county does not include landowner permits issued free of charge.

Permit Holders





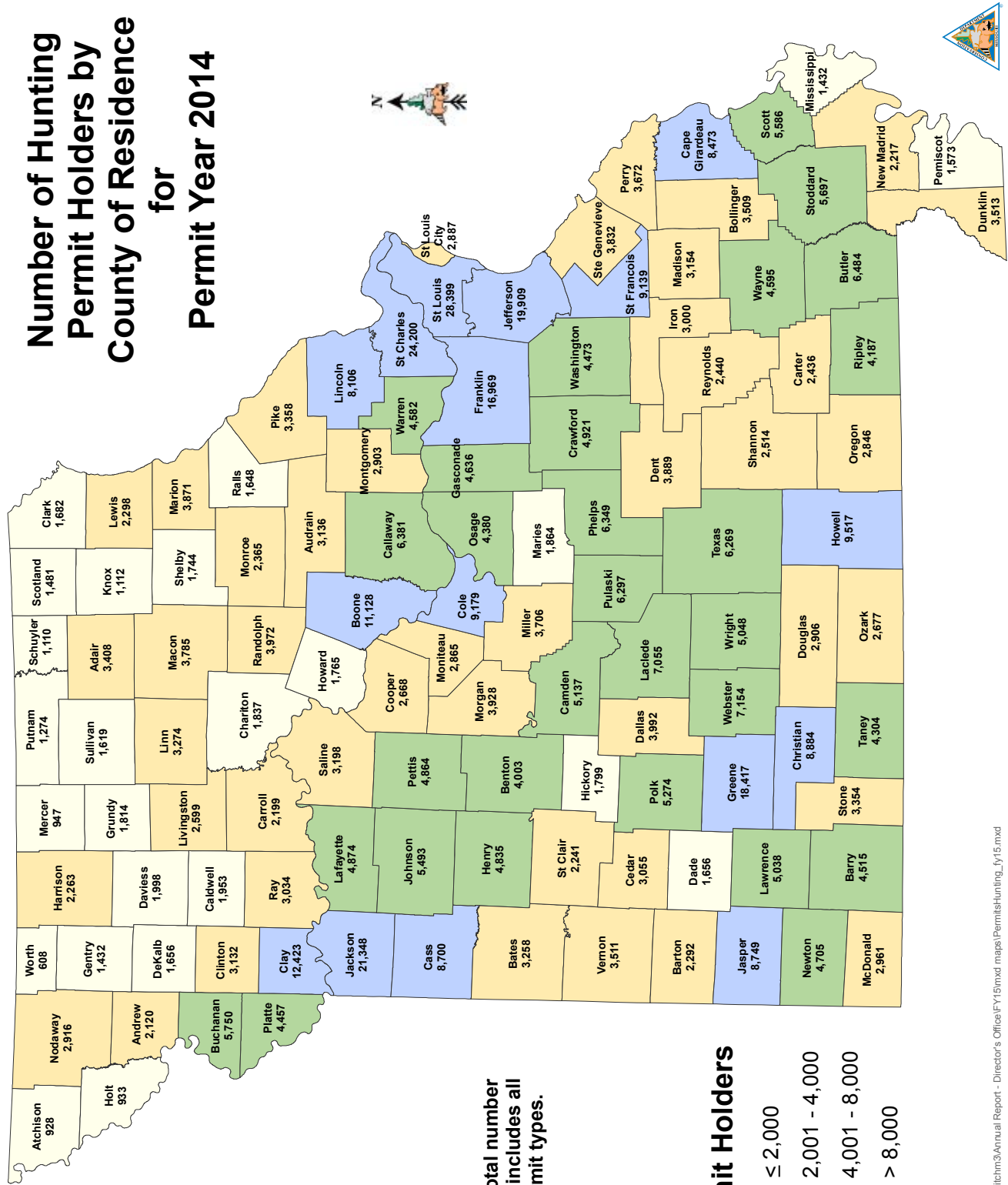
96 2014–2015 MDC Annual Report

2014–2015 MDC Annual Report **97**





Number of Hunting Permit Holders by County of Residence for Permit Year 2014





mdc.mo.gov